

# EXHIBIT D

## LETTERS FROM OTHERS

Chip Gibbons  
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Allison Lee  
Karen Malpede  
Stefania Maurizi  
Alex McDonald  
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Frances Dunham  
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Joy Fatooh

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Henry and Jaki Florsheim  
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Noah Kulwin  
Barbara Larcom  
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Max Liotta  
Neil Madden  
Siri Margerin  
Jesse Marsden  
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Marilyn Montenegro

Sharon Paltin  
Rosalie Paul  
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Nancy Roberts  
Steve Roddy  
Deborah Rosenstein  
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Christian Stalberg  
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David Turnoy  
Katharine Tussing  
Sue Udry  
Parker Weaver  
Janet Weidman  
Susan Witka  
Mary Zelaya

July 1, 2021

Honorable Liam O'Grady  
U.S. District Judge

Dear Judge O'Grady:

I am writing to urge you to grant leniency to Daniel Hale. While I do not know Daniel Hale personally, I am an expert on free expression policy and the Espionage Act, under which Hale has pled guilty. As a journalist and researcher, I write about US national security policy, especially as it impacts constitutional liberties. I also serve as policy director of Defending Rights & Dissent, a free expression advocacy organization that has worked to educate members of Congress and the general public alike about the Espionage Act. I understand that as a judge it is your duty to uphold the law, not enact my personal policy preferences. I am not writing to urge you to do so. However, I believe the information that I have can help to inform your decision. I believe this information shows that Daniel Hale deserves the most lenient sentence possible.

Currently, as a journalist I am working on a book about the history of the FBI's role in national security policy and its implications for civil liberties. This book comes on the heels of half a decade of writing articles, reports, etc. on this topic. While I recognize Daniel Hale's disclosures were not on this subject, I believe my own experiences highlight the way secrecy frustrates public debate and how many channels for the release of public information are broken. Such context is important in considering why Hale took the actions he did and the role of sources like Hale in journalism today.

When informing the US public on government policy, I find it important to rely on primary sources as much as possible. Literature in this field is filled with on the one hand official stories and press releases, and on the other hand rank speculation and outright conspiracy theories. Neither serves the American people, which is why I believe it is so important to work from the government's own documents.

The FBI and other national security entities have a legitimate interest in concealing some information from me. If they were closing in on a murderous international terrorist or about to ferret out a spy turning over our nuclear launch codes to a hostile foreign adversary, it would make sense they would not give me the details of their imminent arrest. But when it comes to information about closed abusive investigations that were made in violation of their guidelines (or, equally pressing, were in compliance with their guidelines, thus raising questions about the sufficiency of these protections), such secrecy is not justified.

And in my own experience, the FBI has hardly been forthcoming. Even when dealing with decades-old records from Hoover-era assaults on the Civil Rights Movement that the FBI has long since conceded were abuses of power, they still try to frustrate

researchers from obtaining these documents. The FBI's own failure to comply with FOIA has caused me to have to pursue litigation to compel the release of documents that were in the public interest and vital to my work.

The classification system is supposed to be used to protect genuine national security secrets, not be used to conceal information from the American public. Yet, far too often the classification system is used to do just that. That is why some of the biggest revelations in US history, such as the Pentagon Papers, J. Edgar Hoover's illegal counterintelligence program against domestic groups, or the CIA's spying on anti-war protesters, were all made in contravention of the law. These revelations nonetheless changed US history, sparking public debate, congressional inquiry, and serious policy changes.

Daniel Hale's decision to aid a journalist in newsgathering is similar to these types of revelations. In spite of the name of the statute he pled guilty under, he is not a spy. His revelations about the deeply controversial US targeted killing program did not harm our national security but enriched our democracy. The use of targeted killings by our government has been at the center of an intense public debate. Hale sought to better inform that public debate by providing information that showed how it impacted civilian populations.

As policy director of a free expression organization, much of my professional portfolio over the last several years has dealt with the Espionage Act. In carrying out my responsibilities, I have held in-depth conversations with legal historians and other experts on the law, former intelligence officials, journalists, attorneys who represent clients charged under the Espionage Act, and Espionage Act defendants (including both those who had their charges dropped and those who were convicted). I have, at the requests of a member of Congress, redlined the statute in order to create a bill reforming the Espionage Act.

The Espionage Act conflates two different categories of defendants. It treats as the same those who are spies and those who are government insiders who act as journalists' sources. For the longest time, the use of the Espionage Act against journalists' sources was a rarity: so rare that when Samuel Morison was convicted under the Espionage Act, President Clinton pardoned him. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan championed Morison's pardon. Writing in his latent capacity as chairman of the Commission on Protecting and Reducing Government Secrecy, the senator told the president:

*The Espionage Act has always been used to prosecute spies, those passing information to foreign powers. The exceptions are exceptional. President Nixon sought the prosecution of Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo for leaking the Pentagon Papers. Their cases were dismissed. But the Reagan administration successfully prosecuted Mr. Morison.*

*What is remarkable is not the crime, but that he is the only one convicted of an activity which has become a routine aspect of government life: leaking information to the press in order to bring pressure to bear on a policy question.*

While Morison's prosecution was an "exceptional exception," in the last decade and a half Espionage Act prosecutions of journalists' sources have become the norm. The Espionage Act has been selectively applied. Individuals within government routinely share information with journalists that bolster the government's public claims. When it comes to those who expose information that paints a very different picture of the government's activities, whether it is the release of the Pentagon Papers or Hale's disclosures about targeted killings, the reaction is very different.

Hale is not a spy and should not be sentenced as such. I urge you to show the maximum leniency possible. Hale assisted in newsgathering on a matter of grave public concern. His actions were not rooted in personal gain but in informing our democratic debates. The fact that Hale was prosecuted at all has less to do with the fact that he disclosed information without proper authorization than that he did so in a manner that painted the government's targeted killing program in a critical light.

The government has many valid reasons for keeping secrets. Unfortunately, as my own experience as a researcher has shown, the government often uses secrecy to conceal information of public interest from the public. Such actions undermine our ability to make democratic decisions. The Espionage Act has morphed, to the surprise of many policy-makers, from a law aimed at actual spies to one that targets whistleblowers. It is not the purpose of a law aimed at spies who aid hostile foreign powers to go after individuals like Daniel Hale who aid journalists, the public, and our democracy. Yet, it has tragically been selectively used for that purpose.

While I understand that it is your job to rule on the law as it is, not as it ought to be, I hope you will take the information I have shared with you into account. And I hope it will lead you to afford Daniel Hale the maximum leniency possible.

Sincerely,

Charles Gibbons  
Policy Director  
Defending Rights & Dissent

**From:** [Elizabeth Hill](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Thursday, April 15, 2021 3:27:49 PM

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To The Honorable Liam O'Grady,

My name is Elizabeth Hill and I live in New York City. I don't know Daniel Hale personally, but I've been exposed to him through Code Pink, an activist group that has spoken out against warfare at large and specifically against drones. I admire Code Pink because their tone is always respectful and their position is highly informed and grounded in facts. I've educated myself on drone warfare through Code Pink and through other sources over the years. I've come away from my education deeply concerned about drone warfare, and how it kills innocent civilians who have not been identified as threats or terrorists. I've read about innocent civilians going about their lives who are suddenly killed: a group of friends gathered together for a meal under the night sky, talking and laughing—sacrificed because they happen to be in proximity to an individual who is deemed a terrorist; an uncle and brother-in-law and nephew returning from a long day of work along a mountain path—again scarified due to proximity. These lives are all tragically cut short. I've read, too, about devastated communities left behind; they not only sustain the loss of their beloveds, but they go on to live in fear for their own lives and for the lives of other loved ones. I've also read that such indiscriminate attacks can radicalize individuals within the community and lead them to join terrorist forces, which they might not otherwise have joined. This can only increase the threat to the American people.

I recently rewatched (on youtube) Daniel speak at a Code Pink event held in 2013. I was once again deeply moved and impressed by Daniel's humility and sincerity. He doesn't seek accolades or applause for his unusual actions (in fact, he specifically tells the audience not to applaud him). In the course of his speech, Daniel reveals the moment at which he could no longer participate in drone warfare. It is when he and his fellow service members have located a man whom they have targeted as dangerous. This man is with four other men—none of whom have been identified as threats. Nonetheless, there is an order to conduct a "kinetic strike" against all five men. That means four potentially innocent civilians are sacrificed for the sake of one man who has been deemed a threat. For me, this is unacceptable. For Daniel, it marked his disillusionment with the military—whom he had invested in for many years. Daniel has great concern and empathy in his voice when he speaks of these men. He speaks of seeing the group gathered around a campfire drinking tea. These strangers from so far away (four of whom are not suspects) are fully human to Daniel. He is clearly driven to leave the military and to expose the truth about drone warfare out of a profound concern for his fellow humans. While I know it is illegal to disclose classified military information to the public, I believe that Daniel did so because he is a man of great compassion and moral standing. He revealed information to an investigative journalist in an effort to educate the American people. His conscience compelled him to do so, and he has risked so much in the process, including now time in prison. What's more, I believe that Daniel's disclosures are of utmost interest to the American public. We are not informed of drone warfare by the mainstream news. We do not learn of the high number of innocent civilians who are killed. It is my belief that there would be pressure on the military to reform its indiscriminate approach to drone warfare if the truth was fully revealed to the American people. As a result, so many innocent lives would be spared, and perhaps fewer people would be radicalized and join enemy forces. This can only be for the good—which is what Daniel Hale pursues.

Respectfully yours,

Elizabeth Hill

**From:** [miklhut@aol.com](mailto:miklhut@aol.com)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Friday, April 23, 2021 7:53:40 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

RE: Daniel Hale

Dear Sir,

I am writing in support of Daniel Hale. My name is Mikal Hutto. I live in San Leon, Texas. I am the mother of a recently retired, career Army Veteran. Daniel's case really struck home with me. My son was a good soldier but after he retired and came home, he suffers terrible depression and PTSD over the children he saw killed. I can understand Daniel's frame of mind and how disturbed a lot of these young men become upon seeing and knowing so many civilians were killed. Daniel went with his conscience and I can see why he did. These were some different wars and so many civilians perished at our hands. Daniel Hale was damned if he told and damned if he didn't. My son, never told anyone but his parents, his feelings and he still suffers guilt, depression and PTSD, though to his knowledge, he never killed a child. He still feels responsible and probably always will.

The Army wants to hire intelligent, sensitive young men, not brutes who kill for pleasure and that's admirable but it sometimes does these young men great harm and they feel compelled to try to right a wrong. Please take this into consideration and do not give Daniel Hale prison time, he has suffered enough, losing his job, having PTSD and now being prosecuted as well as, losing the respect of the very institution he was proud of being part of.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to communicate on Daniel



Hale's behalf.

Sincerely,

Mikal Hutto

@aol.com

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Lee Allison  
[REDACTED]  
Lexington, KY 40509

Dear Honorable Judge O'Grady,

I want to ask that you to provide leniency for Daniel Hale.

I am a business professor at a public university. I have four children and five grandchildren. I have two sons-in-law that served in two branches of the military. One was deployed a number of times to Iraq. The first time he ever boarded a plane, he had to jump out of it as he was in the 81<sup>st</sup> Airborne. The other was in the Navy and was deployed to ally countries during his tours.

I have a great love and appreciation for this nation, and the two highest values I have is appreciation for the sanctity of life and freedom. One cannot have one without the other.

I am saddened and aggrieved that government has so egregiously mistreated Daniel Hale and other true whistleblowers, just as I am sad and aggrieved at the war and destruction that this government perpetually wages against innocents by risking, and harming innocents. I can only imagine the stress and depression that must attend being so violently mistreated when one has put one's own life on the line to protect this great country and its people. It has to make one question everything.

Most Americans don't support crimes against humanity. Those who do have often succumbed to lies, and very often, they succumb because never in their life do they have the opportunity to hear the truth of the horrors that are occurring in their names, "on their behalf."

I ask you to be sustained and strengthened in recognizing the value that real whistleblowers provide to each and every one of us.

I don't know Daniel Hale personally. However, I am so grateful for his courage and bravery. I have listened to him speak online. I am touched by his humility. His actions speak for themselves. Young men like Daniel and my sons in law love their country. They are devoted to our country and securing freedom and its future for our children.

I ask you to provide leniency to Daniel Hale and recognize that it is the American citizen and men like him that need your protection. The government per se needs no protection. They have a monopoly on violence and control the justice system and have the power to destroy anyone that challenges them. We rely on people like you to judge wisely and appropriately and stand in the breach to protect the liberty and freedom that we all so often take for granted, but that Daniel Hale has risked everything to protect.

Most sincerely,  
Lee Allison

28 June 2021 The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I write as a mother, a published, produced, award-winning playwright and an Associate Professor of Theater and Environmental Studies at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York, to ask for clemency for Daniel Hale. I have followed Daniel's case and listened to him speak. He is the sort of young man I would be proud to have as a son. Perhaps, if Daniel were my son, he would have had the cultural advantages that would have kept him from the army in the first place; as the army, without a draft, is where young people often go to find or advance themselves. It is clear that Daniel, once involved in the targeted assassination program, came to the sort of awakening that had it happened while he was writing a college term paper would have earned him an "A". Instead, he is facing prison because he had the courage to face the truth and act on it.

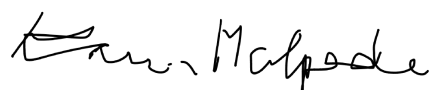
In my role as professor, I have often taught veterans and students whose siblings serve in the military. I have heard the stories of sexual assaults, depression, despair and suicide that too often accompany military service. I have had students who had to sit by the door so they could get out, if they felt a wave of violence coming over them. I have students who could not tolerate being in class and with whose therapists I have worked so that they could complete the class remotely. One such young man was able to write his own story of guilt and self-recrimination as his final paper and he delivered it to me in person, even though he had never been able to sit in class with others. I treasure that paper and am proud to have played some small part in his healing. I've never had a student who was a veteran that I could describe as carefree or unburdened by their service. Veterans who are not able to speak out and be heard are those that we often lose to drugs or to self-harm.

Daniel is a young man who has similarly suffered. He wished to do good and found he was doing bad; he was going against his conscience and participating in the remote murder of people he thought might be completely innocent. Who among us could continue to do such a thing? Only criminals. But it was only once Daniel spoke out that he became a target of the law. As a teacher of literature, as a lover, especially of Irish literature, I have learned to revere those who act nonviolently in accordance with their conscience. They free themselves and others by speaking truth.

Respectfully, as a mother, artist and educator, I ask that you commute Daniel's sentence to time served. This is a young man who can make a real contribution to our troubled world. I see no purpose in a prison sentence.

Thank you for your attention,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ann Malpede".

Karen Malpede

Rome, 17 July 2021

**To the Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia**

Dear Judge O'Grady,

My name is Stefania Maurizi, and I am an Italian investigative journalist currently working for the major Italian daily Il Fatto Quotidiano, after previously working for the Italian daily la Repubblica and for the Italian newsmagazine l'Espresso.

I have spent the last 13 years working as an investigative journalist specialised in investigations based on classified documents. It is thanks to this work that I have come to understand the vital role of whistleblowers like Daniel Hale and before him Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden.

Though I have never met Daniel Hale in person, I do know that he is believed to be the journalistic source for the Drone Papers, a series of investigations published by the Intercept in 2015. I followed those revelations very closely and immediately realized they constitute exceptionally important information in the public interest.

For the first time, those documents allowed shedding light on US drone strikes, which are completely shrouded in secrecy and are responsible for killing thousands of innocent civilians in countries like Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Somalia, thus fuelling the resentment of local populations.

Five months before the Intercept started publishing the Drone Papers, president Obama publicly apologised for the killing of two western citizens in Pakistan by a US drone strike: the US aid worker, Warren Weinstein, and the Italian aid worker, Giovanni Lo Porto. When president Obama apologised, it was the first such apology ever from the US government. As far as I know, no families of the victims of US drone strikes in Yemen, Afghanistan or Pakistan, have ever received any apology.

At that time, as an Italian journalist working for La Repubblica, I immediately began investigating the killing of Giovanni Lo Porto. I was able to unearth the confidential agreement between the US government and the family of Giovanni Lo Porto for a "condolence payment" amounting to 1,185,000 euros, a revelation (see my investigation published in the Italian daily la Repubblica: [https://inchieste.repubblica.it/it/repubblica/rep-it/2016/09/15/news/dagli\\_usa\\_un\\_milione\\_per\\_ricordare\\_lo\\_porto-147848020/](https://inchieste.repubblica.it/it/repubblica/rep-it/2016/09/15/news/dagli_usa_un_milione_per_ricordare_lo_porto-147848020/)) which was widely reported by prominent US and international media such as the Washington Post (see the Washington Post article: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-agrees-to-pay-nearly-3-million-to-family-of-italian-killed-in-cia-strike/2016/09/16/5c213af6-7c1a-11e6-bd86-b7bbd53d2b5d\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-agrees-to-pay-nearly-3-million-to-family-of-italian-killed-in-cia-strike/2016/09/16/5c213af6-7c1a-11e6-bd86-b7bbd53d2b5d_story.html)).

However, all my attempts to unearth factual information on the killing of Giovanni Lo Porto and Warren Weinstein completely failed. I have spent years filing FOIA requests in the United States and in Italy and chasing information from confidential sources.



It was not only my attempts that failed; attempts by Italian prosecutors also proved to be completely useless. Although we have some formidable prosecutors, they have failed to bring any truth and justice in this case.

I have witnessed the pain and trauma of Giovanni Lo Porto's family in first person. It is a human right to have closure, and to know how your loved one died.

The US drone strikes are shrouded in complete secrecy. They kill at will. The entire machine is a very sinister assassination complex. No democracy can tolerate such an assassination complex, accountable to no one.

In 2017, when a three-judge panel on the U.S. Court of Appeal for the D.C. circuit was called to rule on the lawsuit brought by a Yemeni man whose relatives were killed by a US drone strike, Judge Janice Rogers Brown wrote a separate opinion expressing her serious concern about this lack of accountability. She called the congressional oversight of the military "a joke".

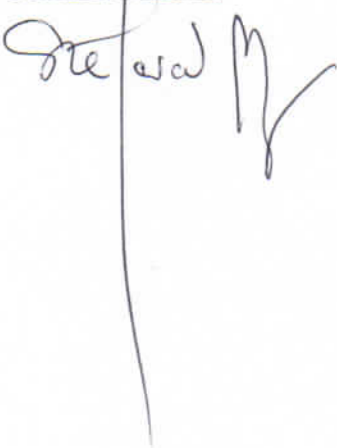
For the first time, Daniel Hale has brought some sunlight to this and he did so in the public interest, acting as a conscientious objector and as a prominent journalistic source.

The United States is a democracy: journalists and journalistic sources are protected by the First Amendment. It must be possible for the Fourth Estate to reveal information on extrajudicial killings and to do so safely. Unless journalistic sources are protected and safe, it is impossible to have a free press. Daniel Hale does not belong in prison.

I respectfully request that you show leniency towards Daniel Hale.

In faith,

Stefania Maurizi

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Stefania Maurizi', with a long vertical line extending downwards from the end of the signature.

**From:** [Alex McDonald](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Monday, April 19, 2021 12:02:06 PM

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April 19, 2021

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

R.E. Daniel Hale

Dear Judge O'Grady:

My father was a Marine Corps drill instructor. Growing up abroad, I started the boy scouts in the American embassy in Paris. I grew up being proud of being American believing that we are all ambassadors when we are abroad; we all represent our country. As an Eagle Scout I have taken the charge to be loyal to my country and our values. These values have to include integrity and the respect for others as we want to be respected.

Another one of these values is democracy. My oldest son is named after Thomas Jefferson. My belief is that it is imperative that we ensure that our government be one of the people, by the people and for the people. This is only possible if the people know what is going on, and specifically, know what their government is doing. And if our government is doing things in secret that don't reflect our values then it is important for those who do know to speak out. Although secrecy is necessary for national security, we cannot let it be the tool used for compromising our values.

I have heard Daniel Hale speak. He has been a devoted American serving our country in Afghanistan. He has been loyal to our country. And when he was faced with choosing to do what he believed was morally right and best for our country or following what was requested of him, he had the courage to stand for his values. He took on the legal system, loss of work and financial hardship in addition to other consequences to stand for his values and his country.

As an American I am grateful to Daniel Hale for serving me as an American. If my government does not share with me what we are doing which actually increases terrorism rather than curtails it, then I depend on fellow patriots like Daniel Hale to tell me the truth. I therefore respectfully ask for leniency in the case of the defendant Daniel Hale, who pled guilty to one count of "retention and transmission of national defense information" in violation of the Espionage Act on March 31, 2021. I request that Hale receive no prison time.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kenneth A. McDonald

[REDACTED]

Houston, TX 77008





Member of the European Parliament

The Honourable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Brussels, 15 April 2021

Dear Honourable Judge Liam O'Grady,

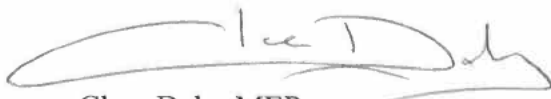
As members of the European Parliament, and as members of the Afghanistan delegation in the European parliament, we write in support of Daniel Hale, a young man who followed his conscience by revealing information about a secretive U.S. drone warfare program that led to the death of many innocent people in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

Having recently returned from Iraq, we saw first-hand the destruction that the US-led invasion and occupation has caused and the loss of so many innocent lives. The same is true in Afghanistan. The use of airpower, including drone warfare, has resulted in so much unnecessary death and suffering.

We find it courageous that someone involved in identifying targets for the Department of Defense Joint Special Operations Task Force would try to get the information to the public when he saw the program being terribly misused and taking the lives of many innocents. The gross human rights violations he revealed are not only in the interest of the U.S. public, but the public in all of our countries that have been participating in these military actions, including those in Europe. It is through the revelation of such information that we, as elected officials, are better able to do our jobs in pushing our governments to adhere to the norms of international law.

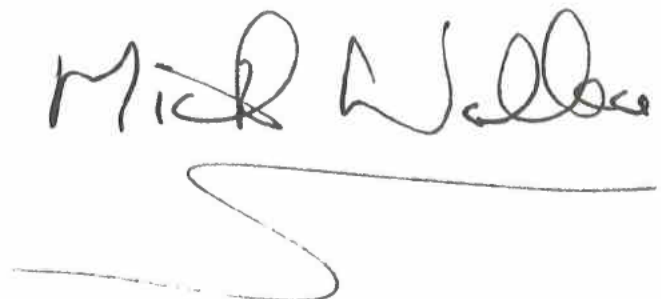
We urge you to take this public interest into consideration when sentencing Daniel Hale.

Thank you for your consideration.



Clare Daly, MEP

Mick Wallace, MEP



**From:** [David Ball](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 14, 2021 3:52:08 PM

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Dear Judge O'Grady,

I understand that Mr. Hale's disclosures were in violation of US law. But I do hope you will consider another principle, too, in sentencing him. Whistleblowers, those who disclose wrongdoing or disinformation, *even by our own government*, should be protected. If I understand correctly, Mr. Hale disclosed information about what our drones were doing. Since our tax money pays for the military budget, we have a right to know.

In fact, a democracy depends on a transparent government. True, there will always be secrets whose disclosure could put our people in harm's way. I fail to see how this could possibly be one of those cases.

Thank you very much for your consideration of these factors.

Sincerely,  
David Ball

David Ball  
Professor Emeritus of French and Comparative Literature  
Smith College  
  
Northampton MA 01063

**From:** [Medea Benjamin](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Cc:** [Daniel Hale](#)  
**Subject:** letter in support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 27, 2021 10:52:15 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I write on behalf of Daniel Hale, who is awaiting sentencing. I am an author of the book *Drone Warfare: Killing By Remote Control* and have spent much time studying the growing use of drones in military actions. In 2012, I had the privilege of organizing a 34-member delegation to visit the Waziristan region in Pakistan, a place under intense drone attack by the Obama administration. I met people who had lost their loved ones—innocent children, grandmothers, teachers—to U.S. drones simply because they were in the wrong place at the wrong time.

A year later, a group of us traveled to Yemen, meeting with families whose loved ones were killed by U.S. drones. Communities that had positive feelings towards to the U.S.—oftentimes with relatives living here—turned into our enemies once we murdered their loved ones who posed no threat to the United States.

While our government tells us about the so-called “precision” of drone killings, thanks to people with a conscience like Daniel Hale, we learned that these strikes were definitely not precise. In their wake, they leave death, maiming, trauma and destruction of community, culture and trust. This is the reality of people around the world who are living under armed drones and military drone surveillance.

That's why I am so grateful to Daniel Hale. He helped us understand the insidious nature of drone warfare. He followed his conscience. He understands that the U.S. is actually less safe when it unleashes havoc on entire communities and kills innocent people.

I urge you to consider the reasons for Mr. Hale's actions, and to not sentence him to any prison time.

Thank you so much for considering this letter.

Sincerely,  
Medea Benjamin  
[REDACTED]@gmail.com  
[REDACTED]

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*Medea Benjamin*

*CODEPINK* *Co-founder*



**From:** [Mary Bissell](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 14, 2021 6:46:11 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Hello,

My name is Mary Bissell. I am a teacher in Rio Rancho, NM. I am writing in support of Daniel Hale because after he pleaded guilty in late March, Daniel faces up to a decade in prison for just telling the truth. I try to teach my students to tell the truth, even if it's ugly, even if it's hard, even if they screwed up and need to acknowledge that. A few times, this has kept students safe from abusive situations, violence, etc. Regardless, being honest helps my students learn responsibility and sends them out into the world to be productive citizens. I would be proud if Daniel had been my student.

Daniel is a proud American. He believes we can do better and truly be the best. I can't imagine being in his position--the hardships faced and the toll the case has taken on him (e.g. he has experienced PTSD, loss of work, and financial hardship).

There should be immense public interest in what Daniel has revealed to the American public. He should not be punished for that.

Thank you for your time,  
Mary Bissell

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Honorable Judge O'Grady,

I am writing to you in regards to drone whistleblower Daniel Hale, who sits in a federal prison, awaiting his sentencing hearing July 27, at which time, you will determine Daniel's fate. Please give thorough consideration to all the issues of his case, recognize the higher universal principals that motivated Daniel, and ultimately show the compassion that Daniel deserves by not giving him any further prison time.

My name is Toby Blomé. I am a retired physical therapist and former teacher. For the last 12 years I have been working tirelessly to speak out against the U.S. drone assassination program, working to educate the American public about the criminal and immoral aspects of this very secret and illegal program. In 2012, I traveled to Pakistan as a member of a U.S. civilian peace delegation, which included meetings with family members of civilian victims killed by U.S. drone strikes in the northwestern tribal region of Pakistan. It was absolutely heartbreaking to hear their personal stories, and I returned home pledging to work toward ending this heinous program.

Especially troubling today, nearly a decade later, is recognizing that the U.S. remote-killing program is thriving and expanding globally, while simultaneously maintaining an even higher degree of secrecy than ever before. In recent years, drone strikes are rarely reported, and almost never tell the human side to the story. The few news reports that are published usually only tell of "air strikes," not specifying if they are drone strikes or not. However, people are regularly being killed by drones, not in combat, but as they are going about their lives, driving down the road, working in a field, sitting in their homes with family, sleeping, attending a school, wedding party or funeral, praying in a mosque. In Afghanistan in September, 2019, 30+ farm laborers were killed by a U.S. drone attack and 40+ others were injured, while merely gathering to harvest pine nuts for the season. Several teenage children, hired to shell the pine nuts, were included in the death toll.

There is overwhelming evidence that the vast majority of those killed by U.S. drones are civilians. The very military documents that Daniel Hale has been accused of leaking support this reality. Without this important leak, the American public would be even more in the dark about this covert and illegal program. Even high level government and military officials, including former president Barack Obama and my own California senator, Dianne Feinstein, have grossly lied about the civilian casualties in drone strikes. Yet, there has been absolutely no accountability for the purposeful dishonesty and misinformation perpetrated by officials about the U.S drone assassination program. Worse, to date, no one has ever been held responsible for the wrongful killing of civilians by U.S. drones, even though these killings are not committed in the "heat of battle," have no urgency, and therefore don't deserve even the slightest opportunity to be excused or "tolerated."

Daniel denounced the false claim that drones protect American lives by not putting them in harms way. Instead, he has stated that drones "embolden commanders and decision makers because there is no threat and there is no immediate consequence." In other words, drones make killing people in foreign lands so much easier. Because no one is given prior warning of imminent strikes that may occur in regions targeted by U.S. drones, these communities, including their children, are being

terrorized daily, resulting in high rates of trauma, PTSD and suicide. As was documented in Pakistan 10 years ago, people have become afraid to attend traditional social rituals such as wedding parties and funerals because these cherished gatherings had become frequent targets for U.S. drones. (Study: Living Under Drones) In addition, at times “double tapping” occurs, where U.S. drones have attacked rescuers following an initial first strike.” Such practice is undeniably a serious war crime, yet, again, no one has been held accountable for these “double taps.”

It’s unconscionable that the use of militarized drones has become normalized in U.S. society. While serving in the U.S. Air Force in Afghanistan, Daniel Hale was involved with identifying, tracking and targeting high-level targets, that, at times, resulted in the killing of civilians, euphemistically referred to as “collateral damage.” More precisely, he witnessed the pre-meditated, purposeful killing of unarmed civilians, by remote means, from the other side of the world. This all happened at a time when officials were denying significant civilian deaths. Daniel’s conscience was awakened by this grave truth, and he ultimately felt a deep responsibility to educate the public with the hopes that policies would change. Daniel took enormous risks on behalf of all of us to reveal the crimes being committed regularly by the Pentagon and the CIA, violating international and national laws. He should be commended as a national hero.

We live at a disturbing time when whistleblowers and journalists, who should always be protected by society and it’s laws, are prosecuted and serve time, while the individuals most responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity find haven in a built-in failed system, and are never prosecuted.

As the judge in Daniel’s case, I beg of you to be thorough and fair in your assessment and conclusion and recognize that what Daniel did was the most honorable thing that he could do. Your decision in Daniel’s case may have long lasting effects on the fate of future whistleblowers. Daniel is already severely traumatized by the cruel drone program that he participated in. He has suffered enough. Please help him return to civilian life as quickly as possible so that he can continue to heal from the moral injury that he gravely suffers from. Daniel has earned his freedom more than anyone that I know. Please help him obtain it.

Sincerely,

Toby Blomé

[REDACTED]

El Cerrito, CA

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady


I am writing to you on behalf of Daniel Hale. I have lived in San Francisco for many years.

I learned about Daniel's actions from the movie National Bird. I believe that Daniel's actions exposed possible war crimes.

Whistleblowers are an important part of our political process. They can provide an aspect of the checks and balances against abuses or power by insiders. As such they deserve a degree of protection, and a different consideration than people who have broken some rules purely out of self-interest, such as a person who took bribes or stole property.

If Daniel has broken some laws or rules governing his employment, then it is not inappropriate that he should face some consequences for his actions. I would like to see him sentenced to time served. If you do not agree, then in your sentencing decision, please take into account that he has offered a guilty plea to one of the charges and the public good that was done by his exposure.

Sincerely,

Robert Blumen  
  
San Francisco, CA 94105



Diana Bohn

[REDACTED]  
Berkeley, CA 94707

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

May 12, 2021

Dear Judge O'Grady:

Please show leniency in the case of the defendant Daniel Hale, who pled guilty to one count of "retention and transmission of national defense information" in violation of the Espionage Act on March 31, 2021. Please do not sentence Daniel Hale to any prison time.

Daniel Hale is not a spy, a threat to society, or a bad faith actor. His revelations were not a threat to national security. If they were, the prosecution would be able to identify the harm caused directly from the information Hale made public.

Hale's motive was only to provide the American people with information about government misconduct. I believe that rather than harm our country, Hale's revelations actually enhanced our democracy by providing critical information about what our government has been doing in our name.

As a result of this case, Daniel Hale has experienced PTSD, loss of work, and financial hardship.

Sentencing Hale to years in prison would set a terrible example for freedom of speech and send a message that the American public does not have a right to know about government misconduct.

Please consider giving Hale no prison time!

Sincerely,

Diana Bohn

**From:** [tom brown](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** letters in support of daniel hale  
**Date:** Friday, April 16, 2021 5:48:52 PM  
**Attachments:** [hale letter.odt](#)

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April 15, 2021

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I am a retired public librarian and I have never written to a judge before. I am taking this unusual step because I have learned that Daniel Hale is facing the possibility of a severe prison sentence because of his disclosure of information about the United States' drone warfare program.

I know Mr. Hale only through his efforts to publicize the deeply problematic nature of our drone warfare program. On that basis, I am impressed that he is a conscientious, intelligent, and responsible young man. His disclosure of details about our drone warfare have been motivated by his sense of right and wrong, rather than allegiance to a foreign power, the prospect of monetary gain, or self-aggrandizement. In short, he is not the person the Anti-Espionage Act was enacted to thwart.

I understand that you were born in 1950. I was born in 1952. We have both lived long enough to have witnessed many instances of the government misleading the people, especially with respect to war policy. Over and over again we learn that material has been classified not because its revelation would endanger our security or reveal "means and methods", but because the material is embarrassing.

One would be hard pressed to think of a way that Mr. Hale's disclosures could strengthen the hands of enemies of the United States. Those folks unfortunate enough to live where the drones rain hellfire missiles on them already know all too well the toll our drones take on the innocent. Nothing Mr. Hale revealed gives the Taliban, for instance, any greater capacity for repelling a drone strike.

I for one have nothing but gratitude for Mr. Hale's courageous actions. If the electorate is to function properly in a democracy, it must be well-informed. Mr. Hale has helped all of us understand the reality of our current drone warfare policies better. That is a great public service.

I urge you to sentence Mr. Hale to no incarceration and the minimum fine allowable under the law.

Thank you for your patient attention.

Yours truly,

Tom Brown

[REDACTED]

Delta, Colorado 81416

**From:** [Michael Casey](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter To Judge O'Grady  
**Date:** Thursday, April 22, 2021 3:56:35 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Your Honor,

My name is Michael Casey. I'm a retired elementary teacher living in South San Francisco, California. It has come to my attention that Daniel Hale is be sentenced in your court on July 13 after pleading guilty to violating The Espionage Act with regard to disclosing details of our government's secret drone program.

Over the last ten years, with the help of investigative journalist Jeremy Scahill, human rights activist Dan Kovalik, and Afghan peace activist Fahima Vorgetts, and others, I have become aware of drone warfare conducted by the United States.

It has been said many times that a successful democracy requires an informed electorate. Through these activists and journalists, I have come to believe our government is in violation of the United Nations Charter, the 4th Geneva Convention, and its own principles with regard to human rights.

Daniel Hale, as a whistleblower who was actively involved in the drone program, has provided a valuable public service in corroborating the accounts of witnesses, including surviving family members, to tragic deaths of innocent civilians directly related to this program.

I feel the majority of American would be very disheartened to know what our government is doing in their name. Daniel Hale, I believe, is one such American. For coming forth with his testimony, he has been subject to PTSD, loss of work, and financial hardship. I am respectfully asking, when determining his sentence, to not include prison time.

Sincerely,

Michael Casey

# CODEPINK

Honorable Judge Liam O'Grady  
RE: Daniel Hale

July 6, 2021

Dear Judge O'Grady,

We, the undersigned 5,275 concerned citizens, are respectfully asking for leniency in the case of the defendant Daniel Hale, who pled guilty to one count of "retention and transmission of national defense information" in violation of the Espionage Act on March 31, 2021. We ask that Hale receive no prison time.

Daniel Hale is not a spy, a threat to society, or a bad faith actor. His revelations were not a threat to national security. If they were, the prosecution would be able to identify the harm caused directly from the information Hale made public.

While the courts have ruled that a defendant's motive in a case related to the Espionage Act is irrelevant, we recognize that Hale's motive was only to provide the American people with information about government misconduct. We believe that rather than harm our country, Hale's revelations actually enhanced our democracy by providing critical information about what our government has been doing in our name. We also believe that Hale's revelations help push our government to reassess its drone program in light of its violations of US and international law.

Sentencing Hale to years in prison would set a terrible example for freedom of speech and send a message that the American public does not have a right to know about government misconduct. Please consider giving Hale no prison time.

Sincerely,  
Medea Benjamin & Danaka Katovich  
CODEPINK Women for Peace  
[REDACTED]@codepink.org

**And the attached 5,275 people**

[120 Pages of Signatories Excluded but Available to Court Upon Request]

**From:** [Linda Corey](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter on behalf of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Monday, May 24, 2021 12:44:34 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I am an American citizen who is writing to you from Lake Forest Park, WA. I urge you to act with leniency in the case of the defendant Daniel Hale, who pleaded guilty to one count of "retention and transmission of national defense information" in violation of the Espionage Act on March 31, 2021. I request that Mr. Hale receive no prison time.

I believe that the actions of Mr. Hale make Americans safer. The droning of innocent civilians causes victims to radicalize and then to commit terrorist acts against Americans on US soil and our soldiers abroad. I also believe American citizens have the right to know about government misconduct that is committed in our name. This is not espionage, but rather, it is legitimate whistleblowing and should be a protected activity in a free society.

Please consider giving Mr. Hale no prison time. It would be a just action for him, and would send the message to Americans and people in other countries that we are a country committed to a free press and to disclosing and justly addressing military misconduct.

Respectfully,

Linda Corey

**From:** [Maggie Coulter](#)  
**To:** [Todd\\_Richman@fd.org](mailto:Todd_Richman@fd.org)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Sunday, May 16, 2021 4:00:50 PM

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I urge you to issue the lightest sentence for national security whistleblower Daniel Hale.

His courage to speak up makes him a hero.

M. Coulter

Sacramento, CA 95817

**From:** [Michaela Czerkies](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Saturday, July 17, 2021 1:45:54 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

My name is Michaela Czerkies, and I am from Syracuse, NY. I am writing to ask that you give no jail time to Daniel Hale.

Daniel's case is important to me because I believe that people like Daniel should never be imprisoned or punished for exposing the truth to the American people. He took enormous personal risk in sharing information about the US weaponized drone program, shedding light on the enormous civilian death toll of this program - something that we as US taxpayers, constituents, and voters deserve to know about. To take such a risk for the benefit of others (civilians abroad and fellow Americans here) is a selfless act that has caused him great distress, when instead he should feel supported and safe in doing such an honorable thing.

Daniel Hale did the right thing by informing the public about the failures of the US drone program. The American people need this kind of information to be able to work with our elected officials to rectify (to the extent possible) the mistakes of our foreign, domestic, and military policy. People like Daniel Hale enable us as a nation to be truly informed and do better together.

Thank you,

Michaela Czerkies

--

**Michaela Czerkies**

*she/her/hers*

Syracuse Peace Council

[www.peacecouncil.net](http://www.peacecouncil.net)



**Faith De Savigné**

**[REDACTED]  
Potts Point, N.S.W. 2011  
Australia**

**June 10, 2021**

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**The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia**

**Dear Judge O'Grady,**

**I am an American citizen living in Australia. I am writing to support Daniel Hale's actions in telling the truth about drone warfare. I am also asking you to give him his freedom.**

**His bravery in informing the public about the killing of civilians in Afghanistan should be praised not punished. What does that say about the military enforcing silence on their personnel in following their orders to commit immoral acts? The physical and mental toll on Daniel is obvious when being asked to participate in target killings when knowing 90% of those killed were not the intended object.**

**Daniel has risked his freedom and livelihood to ensure the public are aware of these criminal acts and yet he is not able to defend his actions. Open justice should be one of the primary attributes of a fair trial. And yet he has no ability to defend himself and to explain why he has done this for the public good.**

**I have seen Daniel speak in the film *National Bird*, in front of the White House and at a conference on the drone program. He is passionate and intent on informing people in order to stop the killing of civilians.**

**In Australia, we are now being made aware of war crimes committed by Australian soldiers. How can the public support their military if the military wants to keep their acts secret? Especially when they know that keeping war crimes secret allows them to act with impunity.**

**The American withdrawal from Afghanistan now acknowledges the whole terrible waste this war has been. It is only through the efforts of people like Daniel that we know why we must stop.**

**Thank you,**

***Faith de Savigné***

**From:** [Nancy Dollard](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Daniel Hale Support Letter  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 14, 2021 4:12:11 PM

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To The Honorable Liam O'Grady, United States District Judge, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia:

**Please consider this letter of support for Daniel Hale.**

I'm writing to support leniency, and no jail time for Daniel Hale because I consider him to be a whistleblower, who let members of the American public, like me, know about the devastating effects of drone warfare. Since Mr. Hale began speaking out in 2013, more awareness of how drone technology can be used against innocent civilians without regard as to who is murdered, has come to light.

**My concern is that whistleblowers, like Mr. Hale, will be afraid to speak out when military technology like drones, or other weapons of warfare, are used without any accountability. When someone is willing to risk their career, livelihood, and face stress that results in PTSD to do the right thing, that matters to me, and it should matter to you.**

Please send a message that whistleblowers who speak out against the military, or any other organization that may harm innocent civilians, or the public, should not be penalized when abuse and death of innocent people occurs.

Thank you for considering my message of support for Mr. Daniel Hale,

Sincerely,

Nancy Dollard

[REDACTED]

Uniontown, OH 44685

**From:** [Frances Dunham](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Friday, April 16, 2021 2:29:54 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady:

As an American citizen, aged 79, I appreciate Daniel Hale's courage and commitment to the truth. He has suffered in many ways for disclosing how the U.S. drone program has been operating in Afghanistan, information the U.S. public needs and deserves.

I ask you see that he is not sentenced to prison for his well intentioned efforts to uphold the values our country claims to support. Without truth tellers like Daniel, citizens are left in the dark about American activities in foreign lands. Daniel has earned our praise, not punishment.

Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,

Frances Dunham

[REDACTED]

Ashland, Oregon 97520

**From:** [linda fadem](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Saturday, April 17, 2021 5:25:31 PM

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Dear Judge O'Grady:

My name is Linda Fadem and I am a concerned citizen who cares deeply about what our country is doing in my name overseas. In my view, whistleblowing is not a crime and Daniel Hale is a whistleblower. We need courageous people like him to keep our government honest and to tell the truth to the American people. The truth about drone strikes is that they are not effective and more often than not, kill innocent people which is tantamount to murder. Of course the government doesn't want the American people to know any of these things.

All of this has taken a terrible toll on Mr. Hale in the form of PTSD, loss of work, and financial hardship but he has been willing to endure it all for something he cares deeply about. I urge you to give him a very lenient sentence or no sentence at all and reaffirm the fact that whistleblowing is not a crime.

Thank you very much.

Linda Fadem

**From:** [Joy Fatooh](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Friday, July 9, 2021 2:36:14 PM

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July 9, 2021

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Joy Fatooh  
[REDACTED]

Benton, CA 93512

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I began my U.S. government career as a wildlife biologist and retired as an "Environmental Coordinator" -- in short, my duty was to ensure that the public was well-informed of the potential effects of any Federal action on public lands. Transparency in government became dear to me. Of course the military has different rules, but the principle carries through: I believe that we citizens should be able to know the intended and unintended effects of the *kinds* of actions carried out in our name. I also received mandatory annual training in whistleblowers' rights. My impression is that Daniel Hale is a whistleblower, not a spy, and should not be imprisoned. I respectfully ask that when you sentence him, you have these principles in mind.

Respectfully,  
Joy Fatooh

**From:** [Ande Finley](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 28, 2021 7:00:26 PM

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To: The Honorable Liam O'Grady, United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

April 28, 2021

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I am a retired administrator with a keen interest in history and in seeing that our country puts its best foot forward. I came of age during the Vietnam War, and since that time I have observed our country doing things around the world that harm other people. We are supposed to be the beacon of light and freedom, but our policies and military actions do not live up to our ideals.

One of the only ways to change misguided government action is to bring it to the attention of the public. This is exactly what Daniel Hale did in passing on information about the US drone program. Knowing the history of the treatment of whistleblowers in this county, it took great courage for Daniel to follow through on his course of behavior. But thanks to his efforts, the true nature of the drone program is now public knowledge, and the next thing we need to have happen is for the government to end this program.

The Espionage Act under which Daniel is charged is a relic of the First World War, established to stop protests against the entry into that war. I cannot understand how that law, which really has no reason to exist in a country that has Constitutional freedoms of speech and of the press, continues to remain on the books and to be used against citizens who are trying to get our government to do the right thing. No one was harmed by Daniel's action, and instead of being sentenced to prison, I think he should be awarded a medal for his courage in speaking up for what is right. This ordeal has taken a huge toll on Daniel, suffering PTSD, loss of work, and financial hardship. Therefore, I am hoping you will assign a suspended sentence or probation.

Daniel has performed a public service, acting on the basis of what his conscience told him was right. In a democratic system, the press is an important fourth informal branch of government. Sentencing Daniel harshly will discourage future whistleblowers from coming forward with important and needed information. After all, how are we to hold our government accountable unless people know the truth?

Thank you for considering my thoughts.

Sincerely,  
Andrea Finley  
Lopez Island, WA

**From:** [Henry and Jaki florsheim](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter of support for Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 8, 2021 2:29:49 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
US District Judge  
US District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

We are residents of Brooklyn, NY.

Daniel Hale's case is important to us because he has shone a light on violence done in the name of the US military.

It is important that we, as US citizens, know about these actions taken in our names.

Daniel's courage must not be punished further. He must suffer no longer.

His revelations deserve attention, as do any injustices.

Sincerely yours,  
Jaki and Henry Florsheim

**From:** [Sandra Folzer](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 14, 2021 4:46:28 PM

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Honorable Judge O'Grady,

I am an older citizen, 81 years of age.

I am proud of much of my country but worry when whistleblowers are punished for telling the truth.

I have taught school in Ghana West Africa when Nkrumah was President at the point he would not tolerate any differences of opinion....very scary.

I did workshops in South Africa where dissension was outlawed.

I do not want to see our precious free speech, America's pride, to be muddied by attacks on whistleblowers.

Daniel Hale is being punished for telling the truth.

Please free him.

Thank you

Dr. Sandra Folzer



Philadelphia, PA 19118



**From:** [carol fox](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in defense of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Monday, May 24, 2021 3:42:18 PM

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Judge Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I am writing to urge you to consider: What is true justice in the case of Daniel Hale? Is it just to prosecute someone who has risked everything to shed light on drone warfare? Many reports are showing that the state-sanctioned murder of civilians by drones is making our whole world more dangerous; surely the public needs to know what is being done in our names.

I have been an educator all of my life, currently at a community college. I have tried to instruct students in their rights and responsibilities as citizens. I hope in your deliberations on the fate of Daniel Hale, you will come to applaud his courageous and responsible actions as a citizen.

Sincerely,  
Sr. Carol Fox  
Niles, IL

"The way to right wrongs  
is to turn the light of truth upon  
them."

Ida B. Wells

**From:** [Greg G.](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Monday, April 19, 2021 12:00:17 AM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady:

My name is Greg Gardner and I am writing from Albuquerque New Mexico. During my studies in Journalism at the Edward R. Murrow school at Washington State University, and at The University of Oregon, I learned that the role of a journalist was to be, "the eyes and ears of the public". My studies in this field were based on providing "factual information" so the public could make informed judgements on various bits of information provided to them. From seeing the situation pertaining to Mr. Hale, it would seem obvious to me that Mr. Hale was acting as "the eyes and ears" of a reporter. In this democracy, we rely on people telling us "the truth" on what is going on in our society/government. This is important to us. To punish someone for telling fellow citizens what our leaders, government, or other officials are doing in their sworn role, would be acting like we live in North Korea. Telling the truth is NOT a crime. I've never known it to be so. If our society is to punish an individual for reporting what is factual, then we do not live in a democracy-but something along the lines of what exists in North Korea. Mr. Hale is not a criminal. I ask the court that you dismiss this case against him. It is imperative that Americans know what is occurring in this country. If we have informed citizens, then the end result will be leaders that act responsibly to the needs and concerns of all citizens, and a more civilized society. Mr. Hale is contributing to that endeavor. I know His Honor wants to be an informed citizen. If you punish Mr. Hale, you will be going against the principles of being an informed citizen. Mr Hale must be freed. Please do not look down on someone who believes in democracy. Look up to them. Proudly. I leave you with a quote from the late Edward R. Murrow:

"To be persuasive, we must be believable; to be believable, we must be credible; to be credible, we must be truthful."

-Edward R. Murrow

Sincerely,  
Greg Gardner  
Albuquerque New Mexico

**From:** [dfgassman@aol.com](mailto:dfgassman@aol.com)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#); [info@codepink.org](mailto:info@codepink.org)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 14, 2021 7:40:44 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia


Dear Judge O'Grady,

Daniel Hale apparently gave an investigative journalist truthful information about the secretive US drone warfare program, information that revealed gross human rights violations. That has to have been an exceedingly difficult thing for him to do. Having such knowledge & not speaking up about it must be a terrible burden, one that I wish that nobody should ever have to bear. To then harshly punish him would seem egregious.

I realize that there are matters of law here & that you have to make decisions. I do not envy you.

Such situations should never exist. The only way to achieve that is for people to know the truth, & even then it is most unlikely. But I argue that we do have to respect the integrity of someone who speaks out at such great risk to themselves. I urge you to go easy on the young man. He was apparently in an impossible situation & he did the best that he could. I have faced some dilemmas in my life & they have been agonizing. I am confident that you understand what I am saying. THANK YOU.

David F. Gassman [REDACTED] Oakland, CA 94610 Home: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]@aol.com

  
Durham, NC 27713

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady

My name is Laura Gibney and I reside in Durham, NC. I am writing with regard to the case of Daniel Hale.

It pains me greatly to see this courageous and principled young man being prosecuted. As a result of his participation in the drone warfare program, he was racked with guilt over the loss of innocent civilian lives in the program and felt morally compelled to speak out about the human cost of drone warfare. He is our conscience. Sadly, he is paying an enormous personal price for his courageous act of letting us know the reality of all the innocent souls dying through the drone program.

Taking further action to destroy Daniel's life seems terribly wrong. I ask you to please consider giving him no prison time.

Thank you kindly for considering my request.

Sincerely,

Dr. Laura Gibney

**From:** [m.mk@juno.com](mailto:m.mk@juno.com)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Thursday, April 15, 2021 4:56:01 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Your Honor:

Please grant leniency in the case of the defendant Daniel Hale, who pled guilty to one count of “retention and transmission of national defense information” in violation of the Espionage Act on March 31, 2021. I ask that Hale receive no prison time.

Daniel Hale is not a spy, a threat to society, or a bad faith actor. His revelations were not a threat to national security. If they were, the prosecution would be able to identify the harm caused directly from the information Hale made public.

While the courts have ruled that a defendant's motive in a case related to the Espionage Act is irrelevant, I recognize that Hale's motive was only to provide the American people with information about government misconduct. I believe that rather than harm our country, Hale's revelations actually enhanced our democracy by providing critical information about what our government has been doing in our name. I also believe that Hale's revelations help push our government to reassess its drone program in light of its violations of US and international law.

Sentencing Hale to years in prison would set a terrible example for

freedom of speech and send a message that the American public does not have a right to know about government misconduct. Please consider giving Hale no prison time.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mark M Giese

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Mark M Giese.

Racine, WI 53403

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**From:** [Linda Greene](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 21, 2021 7:44:02 PM

---

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady:

I am writing to you in support of Daniel Hale. I first became aware of Hale and his actions in a film several years ago and have been concerned about his case since then.

Hale is a courageous whistleblower, not a criminal. His only "crime" was informing the American public of misdeeds their government was carrying out in their name. Hale deserves to be honored, not to be jailed. I urge you to treat him with leniency.

Thank you.

Linda Greene

[REDACTED]

Unionville, IN 47468

Chris Hedges

Princeton, New Jersey 08540

July 16, 2021

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I write to you as the former Middle East Bureau Chief for The New York Times, an Arabic speaker and someone who lived and reported from the Middle East for seven years.

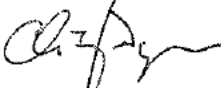
Like nearly all Arabists, including those in the intelligence community, the Pentagon, the State Department and academia I did not support the use of conventional forces to respond to the crimes against humanity carried out by the terrorists on September 11. I was in the Middle East shortly after the attacks and saw how the vast majority of the Muslim world was appalled and disgusted by what had been done in the name of Islam. The best way to fight terrorists is to isolate them within their own society, which had been accomplished after the attacks. Rooting out terrorists then becomes a job for intelligence agencies. It takes a long time, often years, as the Israelis demonstrated after the 1972 murders of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympic games.

Unfortunately, by using conventional military forces in Afghanistan and Iraq we responded with disproportionate force and resurrected terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda. Bombing strikes and drone attacks, with the inevitable large numbers of civilian casualties, along with foreign occupation, are potent recruiting tools in the hands of these terrorist groups.

Daniel Hale's decision to make public the human cost of these strikes was a public service, for we must have an open debate about how and when to use force and the best methods to defeat radical jihadists who seek to do us harm. His leaks to the press make this possible. There are times when leaks are appropriate. There are times when leaks are inappropriate. After the September attacks I was assigned by The New York Times to cover Al Qaeda, work that won those of us on the investigate team at the paper the Pulitzer Prize. I learned pieces of information that could put people in danger and thus never published or made public this material. But in the case of Daniel Hale, his leak was salubrious for us as a nation and a society and illustrates the importance of a free and independent press.

For these reasons, I ask that you be lenient in his sentence.

With respect,



Chris Hedges



**From:** [Maggie Huntington](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of Daniel HALE  
**Date:** Friday, April 16, 2021 12:49:17 PM

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Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Honorable O'Grady,

My name is Maggie Huntington. I am a retired high school math teacher. I taught 23 years in Phoenix Arizona. It was always important to me that my students new the advantages and privileges of living in the United States of America.

One of these privileges, I believe, is that we are free to speak. That is what Daniel Hale did.

As a citizen of the United States of America it is important that I know how my taxes are spent. Daniel Hale gave me that knowledge.

Thank you for giving me your time.  
Respectively, Maggie Huntington

  
Flagstaff AZ, 86001

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [dwain jones](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Thursday, April 15, 2021 4:35:03 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady:

My name is Dwain Jones and I live in Las Cruces, New Mexico. I am writing to ask you to be lenient with David Hale and refrain from sending him to prison. I think Mr. Hale sincerely believed it to be his moral obligation to let the American people know what was being done on their account. I consider it important to have the information that Mr. Hale has courageously shared with his fellow citizens of the United States, as we can't do anything about something we don't even know is taking place. It's my opinion that he ought to be commended for what he did. I'm told that he has already endured significant hardships as a result of his whistle-blowing; please don't cause him to suffer any further punishment--at least not incarceration, as he is really not a criminal.

Thank you,  
Dwain Jones

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone  
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

**From:** [Laura](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Saturday, May 1, 2021 11:49:47 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Honorable Liam O'Grady,

I am writing from Vancouver Canada about Daniel Hale because I am concerned about his fate for telling the truth. Though I am not an American citizen, the action he took to speak up about the use of drones to kill people concern us all around the world. When people stand up against immoral and illegal government action, they must be protected.

The timing of the request to send a letter supporting his actions comes when I'm reading "Bravehearts: Whistle Blowing in the Age of Snowden" by Mark Hertsgaard. The book covers Daniel Ellsberg, Thomas Drake, John Crane, Snowden and others who have risked it all by exposing the truth, and so that's also why I'm writing. Whistleblowers are important for our Democracy and for our souls.

I've heard a speech by Daniel Hale that he made in 2013. This is a man who only cares about what's right and killing innocent people when using drone warfare is wrong. In listening to him, one knows he has nothing to gain and of course, already has lost a lot. Humble is the word that comes to mind.

I'm a social worker who believes that truth telling, connection and sharing will solve the world's problems.

Please let Daniel Hale walk free. We will all be safer when there are more whistleblowers and journalists to tell their stories.

Sincerely,

Laura Jones

**From:** [silverdove@verizon.net](mailto:silverdove@verizon.net)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Sunday, May 30, 2021 11:25:30 AM

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\*\*\*\*\*

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
US District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I am an activist who traveled to Afghanistan as part of a faith-based peace delegation in 2011. Besides learning about the difficult situation of ordinary Afghans, I experienced the unbearable tension that militarism had created. After so much time, it was not a force for good, but something quite negative and counterproductive.

Through the years, it is especially clear to me that the weaponized drone program has caused extraordinary harm. We are all responsible for the deaths of many innocent people.

Daniel Hale will come before you on July 13 for sentencing. I respectfully ask you to consider the traumatic pain that this young man carries from his war experience. Most veterans from military incursions, especially in Afghanistan, have been deeply injured by negative memories of their personal actions.

Prison is no place for anyone dealing with traumatic stress disorder. I trust you will consider the health and safety of Daniel Hale, and find an alternative to incarceration.

Sincerely,

Judith Kelly

[REDACTED]

Arlington, Virginia 22205

**From:** [Kathy Kelly](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Friday, July 16, 2021 6:03:55 PM

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Kathy Kelly  
[REDACTED]

St. Charles, IL 60174

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

July 16, 2021

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I was fortunate, over the past ten years, to visit Afghan families as a guest of the Afghan Peace Volunteers. During about two dozen visits, since 2011, young friends often invited me to accompany them to refugee camps where they worked as volunteer teachers. One such camp, run by the Jesuit Refugee Services, served people displaced by war. Mothers and grandmothers often wept as they told of struggles to find water, food or, during harsh winter weather, blankets. At a "street kids' school" run by the APV, I met many dozens of children whose earnings, working on the streets of Kabul, were the main source of income for their families.

Truthfully, I never met a single Afghan who advocated U.S. airstrikes or felt positive about "tayyara bedun pilot," – a plane without a pilot. Several people who had lost loved ones because of drone strikes expressed grief and anger. "What is the fault?" asked a mother whose son was among four young men killed by a drone. "Where is the proof? And who will bring bread into this family now?" Her son and his friends had been sipping tea in a garden, celebrating their University graduation, when they were killed.

My young Afghan friends surveyed numerous families, asked crucial questions, and tried to communicate what they had seen and heard about consequences of war in Afghanistan.

I think Daniel Hale did the same. He learned about "Operation Haymaker," and realized that widespread and indiscriminate attacks against noncombatants were shrouded in secrecy. He could no longer leave his conscience at the door as he continued learning classified information which the U.S. public would need in order to make informed decisions about drone warfare.

In light of his motivation and the serious consequences resulting from indiscriminate drone attacks, I ask you to be lenient in sentencing him.

Sincerely,

Kathy Kelly

**From:** [Laila khan khan](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Thursday, April 15, 2021 1:33:16 AM

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The Honourable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Honourable Judge Liam O'Grady,

I am writing you in despair, seeing that Daniel Hale, a man who has stood up for basic human rights to protect civilian lives that have been so drastically over stepped by militarism, more specifically, drone warfare, killing so many innocent lives with absolute impunity. The consequences of such deaths turn in third countries, turn more and more people against all that the USA constitutions stands for.

I am originally from Pakistan, where drone warfare, yes has killed many deadly terrorists, but at the same time, it has taken a terrible toll of civilian innocent lives far more of which have been destroyed as well as natural resources. Even one innocent life lost in such a manner is a barbaric way to proceed. That Daniel Hale has pointed this out, demonstrating devastating factors such as drones missing targets, thus responsible for killing more innocent civilians than targets, is relevant for the world to know, especially if it is to be corrected.

Daniel's concern for humanity and compassion for life is an example to our world. Whistle blowers should not be castigated

by vested interests of mighty corporations et al. Especially when bringing attention to the failings of government, it is not going against government interests, but pointing out failings that ought to be addressed clearly, as in this case. Governments must not operate with impunity and hubris; just as any normal human being, they too have failings. Unless the same are acknowledged, they cannot be addressed. We consider ourselves civilised, yet turn to barbaric dark age thinking at times.

A tremendous injustice would be done to humanity if Daniel Hale, because of his concern for humanity, suffers a guilty verdict. The law ought to be applied with good sense, compassion, respect, protecting the lives of citizens over and above those of vested interests.

Honourable judge, I plead for the cause of Daniel Hale, it is the cause of the welfare of humanity... I would like to add here, I am neither leftist nor rightist, a fair world backed by the rule of law is my dream, one perfectly achievable with honourable people as yourself.....

Thanking you,

Best Regards,

Laila Khan

**From:** [george.killingsworth](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** LETTER IN SUPPORT OF DANIEL HALETO  
**Date:** Friday, July 16, 2021 3:59:02 PM

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george killingsworth  
[REDACTED]  
berkeley ca 94705  
[REDACTED]@earthlink.net

July 16, 2021

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

RE: matter of the sentencing of Daniel Hale

My name is George Killingsworth, I am a retired minister of the United Church of Christ .. I am an 86 year old father of three and grandfather of six beautiful and grand grandkids.

Daniel Hale is close to the age of my oldest grandson and is an inspiration both to me and my grandson for his extraordinary conscience and courageous action to alert us to the murderous actions taken in our name and with our tax dollars to kill innocent civilians through robotic drone strikes.

Please please I implore you to spare Daniel any further jail time in your sentencing of him. He has already suffered far too much for his courageous action.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

Respectfully

Rev. George Killingsworth



Noah Kulwin

  
Brooklyn, NY 11216

July 20, 2021

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

To the Honorable Judge O'Grady:

My name is Noah Kulwin. I am writing a letter in support of Daniel Hale, and to ask that he be given the most lenient sentencing possible later this month. I'd like to now tell you a bit about why.

I am a journalist based in New York City. For most of a decade, I have covered subjects like the intersection of technology and American foreign policy. People with integrity like Daniel who are willing to talk about their work, to make it easier for the world to see what they do, are essential for me to do *my* job.

The First Amendment is a funny thing. The Founders have a number of legally enshrined specific speech acts as protected, and the nebulously defined task of journalism is among them. In *New York Times Co. v. United States*, decided in 1971, the Supreme Court maintained that President Richard Nixon did *not* have the authority to suspend imminent publication of the Pentagon Papers. However, Daniel Ellsberg, the government source for the Papers, was not protected from federal prosecution.

Facing a sentence of over 100 years under the Espionage Act, Ellsberg was fortunate: the discovery of the burglary of his therapist's office, an evidently clumsy attempt to seek information to defame Ellsberg, was among the incidents that led to the disclosure of the Watergate scandal. Not long after the burglary was revealed in 1973, government wiretaps of Ellsberg and associates were also uncovered. The case against Ellsberg foundered, was dropped, and Ellsberg to this day is largely understood as an American icon — an essential individual in helping Americans understand more about the country in which they live that they were previously able to.

The salient legal precedent that many Americans remember from this time is that when people come forward to share information about the actions of their government, it is legitimate to question motive and evidence but that the threat of prosecution is meant to have a chilling effect.

I have not met nor do I know Daniel Hale personally, but I know both of the supposed crimes he committed and of his personal hardship. The Constitution guarantees a right to a speedy trial, but two years of Daniel's life have been spent awaiting the forthcoming sentencing. His service in the armed forces has left him with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, a mental condition with which I am intimately familiar, and which would only be exacerbated by incarceration.

I encountered Daniel first through a *New York* magazine article that laid out his plight, and it moved me greatly. I write articles for national newspapers and magazines like *The New York Times* and *The New Republic*, and as I said at the outset of this letter, people who do the things that Daniel Hale is said to have done only make it easier for me to convey accurate information about the world we live in to my audience.

I am writing to ask for leniency in sentencing Daniel Hale later this month. I do not think his, the country's or the court's interests would be served by keeping him in jail. The world is a better and brighter place with Daniel circulating openly in civil society, and I hope to meet him in person to tell him that someday.

Sincerely,

Noah Kulwin

Noah Kulwin

██████████@gmail.com

Noahkulwin.com

██████████

**From:** [Barbara Larcom](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 14, 2021 5:19:47 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I am Barbara Larcom, living in Wooster, a small city in northeast Ohio. I am concerned about the case of Daniel Hale, because I want our country to govern itself with the highest integrity. I believe Daniel Hale was doing his duty to the citizens of the United States, by letting us know of the harm done by weaponized drones in our name, without our knowledge or permission.

These drones have reportedly missed their intended target as much as 90% of the time! And even if they hit the intended target - who decided on the target, on what basis? Again, according to reports, the intended targets were often not definitively known to be enemy combatants of the United States. How does this secret program align with our country's values? It doesn't, and I am grateful to Daniel Hale for letting us know about it.

I heard Daniel Hale speak, and a story he told has stuck with me: It involved his watching a decision made in a matter of seconds, from 10,000 miles away, to kill five men in a group, only one of whom was the designated target - and again, even the actual combat status of that target was unknown. It was clear that the decision had upset him badly, and it changed his view about his own involvement in the military. He is clearly a sincere young man trying to conduct himself by a moral compass.

Daniel Hale's speaking out has already cost him dearly. He is suffering from PTSD and financial hardship. I urge you to show him leniency in your sentencing. Thank you for your careful consideration of this matter.

Sincerely yours,  
Barbara Larcom

[REDACTED]  
Wooster, Ohio 44691  
Phone: [REDACTED]

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**From:** daniel lindley <lindley555@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 19, 2021 4:03 PM  
**To:** Todd Richman <Todd\_Richman@fd.org>  
**Subject:** Daniel Hale Letter

July 19, 2021

The Honorable Liam O' Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O' Grady:

I am writing to urge you to give Daniel Hale as lenient a sentence as possible.

I am a writer, editor and journalist in Eugene, Oregon. As a writer, I attempt to tell the truth. As a journalist and U.S. citizen, I believe it is crucial for the public to know what its government is doing. A functioning democracy depends on an informed citizenry.

I am not a lawyer. Perhaps Hale technically violated the Espionage Act, although this outdated law seems to be used mainly by the federal government to punish whistle blowers who reveal embarrassing secrets government officials would prefer to keep hidden.

Hale showed that the drone program funded by all of us US taxpayers has been killing scores of innocent civilians overseas. It is crucial for the public to know this is going on. My fear is that ultimately this evil will be turned back on us, in one way or another, much as Hitler's evil was ultimately visited on Germany in the devastation of that country.

We need more citizens like Daniel Hale rather than fewer. He really deserves a medal for his courage and truthfulness rather than a long prison sentence.

Please show him mercy and compassion.

Sincerely,

Daniel Lindley  
Eugene, Oregon

Sent from [Outlook](#)

**From:** [Max Liotta](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 14, 2021 4:02:21 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Hello, my name is Max Liotta, a resident of Westport Connecticut. I urge you to show leniency in your sentencing of Daniel Hale. While Mr Hale's actions may have been illegal, he provided a public service. He provided the free press with information that needed to be known. Without a whistleblower, we often have no way to hold those in power accountable. That is not freedom or justice, that is an element of a police state. Once again, I urge you to show leniency to Daniel Hale. Thank you.

Sincerely, Max Liotta

**From:** [Neil Madden](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Friday, April 16, 2021 7:24:44 PM

---

To:

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Honorable Liam Grady

Having followed this case with interest from the UK, I am writing to ask that you consider omitting jail time in the sentencing of Daniel Hale.

The case has taken a terrible toll on Daniel already and I do not see how a jail term can be in the public interest. Nor can it be in the interest of the state to be portrayed as purely vengeful in this matter.

As you know, the Espionage Act makes no distinction between someone who discloses secrets to benefit a foreign adversary (or for money), as opposed to someone who feels a moral obligation to disclose problems inside of government (i.e. Daniel).

The problem with this is that the state, in prosecuting the highly moral Daniel, is itself made to look immoral – particularly if any sentence is untempered with mercy. You have the power to mitigate this situation with your sentencing instructions and I would ask that you do so.

Yours sincerely

Neil Madden

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Sir,

My name is Siri Margerin. I reside in San Francisco, California. I suppose you would say I am a child of the sixties. In fact, I am the child of a man who fought in WWII, came home to join the Army reserves and to raise his children as a boot-strapping conservative republican Americans, a religious man with a finely tuned moral compass. I have been thinking about war and peace, courage, and cowardice since I was a child. As I grew up my father and I did not always see eye to eye on these matters. My father's war and his stories of it set a bright flag and a major challenge to me since my childhood. Would I have the courage to stand up for what was right, stand up for justice and humanity in the face of personal danger and threats to those I loved? This question truly terrified me as a kid, but I am grateful now. As I am grateful to Daniel and folks like him who also challenge us to think hard and deeply about critical human dilemmas. People who remind us to be prepared for these challenges. Challenges as real as a gunfight that also need to be prepared for.

We present this type of challenge to young people every day when asking them to enlist in the US military. We talk about courage and sacrifice. We make them believe in the glory of heroic action. We train them to jump to do tasks that few rise to, tasks that may in certain moments be called heroic. Or may turn out not to be. Tasks that may in fact deeply damage them. Damage them profoundly. Morally, fundamentally.

I have been working with servicemembers and veterans directly for eighteen years now. I know quite a bit about PTSD and Moral injury. I know they are not diseases of the weak. They are human responses to central, critical human survival.

How can we then turn our backs on them when the voice that speaks to them most deeply from head and soul tells them that something they are participating in is wrong.

Daniel had nothing to gain from what he did except what he got: his life overturned completely, the loss of his living, his career, his comfort, his peace of mind and all the pleasures of youth. He gave up every easy thing to do the thing he had been told was the courageous thing to do. He was told that killing in absentia was the coward's way, the terrorist's way, like roadside bombs and IEDs. How can we punish him for noticing that what he was doing was exactly that? With no more control over who his victims were than those cowardly terrorists.

I met Daniel through my work with Iraq Veterans Against the War. I found him to be utterly sincere and believable. I was truly touched by his courage in the face the threats he was facing and the evident pain he was suffering over his actions and their consequences I have not seen him for some years now exactly because of what he has paid for his conscience, but I have never stopped thinking about him. I will support him now with whatever I have to give.

We owe him a debt of gratitude. Not years in prison. Honestly, he is a hero, even if you don't agree with his conclusions. We aspire to this kind upright behavior and responsibility taking by our young. We require it. He is standing up to keep us honest.



What good is it to tsk and exclaim years after the fact over people who committed war crimes because they were ordered to? What good does it do to roll our eyes about citizens who were silent in the face of persecution of their neighbors, genocide, and, all the smaller ways we trade our humanity for our comfort.

We need to develop some toughness, courage, and willingness to keep our eyes open. Not just soldiers/airmen/analysts like Daniel but ourselves as well. We need to wake up from the incapacitating drone(!) of fear talk and misdirection that lulls us to keep our eyes closed until it is too late.

I am aware that these arguments are not to be accepted in his case. This is terrifying. Terrifying because it is so convenient and so damningly purposeful.

“Drone strikes are a form of extrajudicial execution that is illegal under international law. They are a moral travesty. These assassinations are also part of larger foreign policy that is itself troubling. When the crime itself is official policy, what better check exists than the democratic process itself?” And when we forbid and public disclosure and discussion? When we forbid any possible defense who are we?

Sincerely,

Siri Margerin

[REDACTED]

Sf, CA 94117

**From:** [Jesse Marsden](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 14, 2021 7:44:02 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Greetings. Daniel Hale's case is vitally important to our democracy. Electors are not truly free to choose officials while key information is withheld. Hale's disclosures have enabled voters to make an informed choice. This action by Hale is very brave and patriotic. It is dismaying to think of the suffering already inflicted on Hale and how much more is threatened. I hope there will be no further punishment.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jesse Marsden  
Providence RI 02906

Cybele Mayes-Osterman

Washington, DC 20008

[@gmail.com](#)

April 16, 2021

Justice Liam O'Grady

Senior Judge, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Justice O'Grady:

I am writing to you regarding the sentencing of Daniel Everette Hale, the former U.S. intelligence analyst convicted on five counts of espionage. I first became acquainted with Mr. Hale last summer, and have closely followed his case since then, as I believe it is of the utmost importance to maintaining first amendment freedoms.

I am a recent graduate of Barnard College and aspiring journalist. I was four when the Twin Towers fell, and I have vague memories of watching the footage on TV. As a child, I did not understand the justification of U.S. interventions in the Middle East, but I can remember the sense of security I felt that direct action must be necessary because competent people in government found it to be.

As I began to educate myself about political issues in high school, I became aware of U.S. use of drone strikes in interventions abroad. The article detailing the contents of the documents leaked by Mr. Hale came out when I was a junior. The use of drone strikes as extrajudicial assassination tools, sometimes targeting U.S. civilians, struck a harsh contrast with my view at the time of the U.S. military as a principled, constitutional actor on the world stage. The America that I knew would give even terrorists a fair trial before any kind of conviction, let alone innocent civilians.

Now, six years later, I am beginning my own career in journalism. My motivation to enter this competitive field is the journalists before me who used the information at their disposal to hold the powerful accountable, inform the public, and act as watchdogs for the values laid out in the Constitution. Journalists have always played an essential role in documenting war, and bombshell reports such as My Lai, the Pentagon Papers, and the Iran Contra now serve as guiding lessons for policymakers today.

It is my firm belief that Mr. Hale's actions were not only justified under the circumstances but were also a display of patriotism and dedication to the American constitution's guarantee of innocence until proof of guilt. Mr. Hale was well aware of the risk he would take in revealing classified information, and because he took that risk, the American people are now more active, aware participants in our democracy. I can't help but find it counterproductive for the U.S. to punish the people who revealed its past mistakes instead of moving forward with a renewed dedication to Constitutional ideals.

In my view, the difference between the United States and an authoritarian dictatorship is that the former works to inform its civilians, while the latter works to keep them in the dark. This distinction is borne out not in promises, but in actions. I sincerely hope that you will consider this when delivering Mr. Hale's sentence on July 13<sup>th</sup>, and thank you for your service to this country.

Sincerely,

Cybele Mayes-Osterman

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

RE: Support for Daniel Hale

Dear Judge O'Grady:

I am writing in support of Daniel Hale who is scheduled to appear before you for sentencing on July 13, 2021. My name is Marilyn Montenegro, I am a retired social worker and provided social work services for people enmeshed in the criminal justice system for over 40 years. I am well aware of prison conditions and the impact that being in prison has on those individuals who are incarcerated.

I am aware that Daniel Hale has been convicted of revealing information about the drone program that the United States operates. Although arguably US citizens should be aware of actions taken by our government, revealing some actions is illegal and Daniel Hale now faces the consequences for following his conscience rather than the law.

The declared objectives of imprisonment are both to punish the person and to prevent them from continuing to break the law. It appears that these goals have already been met. It is my understanding that Mr. Hale has lost his job and will never again be in a position to reveal information about US government actions. Further, he has experienced serious financial hardship as a direct result of the court case. It is reported, and seems quite reasonable, that he is experiencing severe emotional distress. Daniel Hale does not pose a threat to public safety, he has taken responsibility for his actions and apologized to those who have been harmed. I urge you to find an alternative to imprisonment when you sentence Daniel Hale.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Montenegro, PhD, LCSW  
Redondo Beach, CA

**From:** [shsharealike@saber.net](mailto:shsharealike@saber.net)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 14, 2021 3:55:45 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

I am Family Physician in a rural "need" area of the US, writing to respectfully asking for leniency in the case of the defendant Daniel Hale, who pled guilty to one count of "retention and transmission of national defense information" in violation of the Espionage Act on March 31, 2021. I ask that Hale receive no prison time.

Daniel Hale is not a spy, a threat to society, or a bad faith actor. His revelations were not a threat to national security. If they were, the prosecution would be able to identify the harm caused directly from the information Hale made public.

I am a Conscientious Objector to participation in war and killing, including the use of drones which have been well documented to carry a horrible burden in death and harm to non-combatants.

We have whistleblower laws to help protect society's need to know the truth about what is being done in our names. Justice in this case involves mercy, (and it is just to acknowledge the price this truth teller has already paid.)

Thank you for your kind attention,  
Sharon Paltin, M.D.

**From:** [Rosalie Paul](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** A letter for Judge Liam O'Grady - please be sure he gets it....thank you  
**Date:** Friday, April 16, 2021 12:19:21 PM

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The Honorable Judge Liam O'Grady

United States District Court

United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia

April 16, 2021

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I am Rosalie Paul, a resident of Brunswick, Maine and a long time activist for peace and social justice.

I'm writing in support of Daniel Hale in the hope that you will agree with my sense that whistleblowers are vital to the health of our culture.

When the government carries out policies that are highly unethical or even illegal, it is the responsibility of the citizenry to alert the populace so that justice can be met.

That is what Daniel Hale did, wisely and with good conscience.

The laws we have made to punish this truth-telling responsibility are wrong and must be removed from the books.

Laws designed to hide government wrong-doing from the people are certainly unacceptable.

No wonder the people have so little trust in our leaders.

Please offer Daniel Hale leniency and your pride in him as a responsible citizen.

Thank you.

Rosalie Paul

[REDACTED]

Brunswick Maine 04011

**From:** [Allan Peterson](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Friday, April 16, 2021 4:09:28 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia


Dear Judge O'Grady,

My name is Allan Peterson. I am 80 years old. I am writing because of the courage of Daniel Hale to speak publicly, and at great personal risk, to the true nature of his experiences at what the government does in our name, without our permission, to other nations and non-combatants.

His is a deeply personal story of moral commitment. I heard Daniel speak at a conference on drone warfare and was struck by his realization and remorse for the part he played in a dehumanized and impersonal offensive. It was clearly transformative for him.

How would the public ever know about the actual details of such government actions without such first person accounts and the toll they take? Daniel is doing a great public service and I am grateful for his action. I am asking you for leniency in deciding his case.

Respectfully,

Allan Peterson  
  
Ashland, OR 97520

**From:** [Alison Phillips](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Sunday, April 18, 2021 11:08:43 AM

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The Honourable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge Liam O'Grady,

My name is Alison Phillips. I am an 80-year-old retired science teacher living in Scotland (UK) with a concern for issues of justice and human rights, world-wide, and in particular the effects of warfare on innocent people described so often as "Collateral Damage", a term which disguises both their humanity and the unjust horror they suffer. We hear of the deaths and injuries affecting **our** troops but seldom the devastation inflicted on others. It is understandable that robotic ways of reducing our casualties are welcomed, but important that we know drones and other modern technologies do not reduce the innocent casualties caused. In my view those who try to tell the truth of what damage weapons cause are doing a valuable service to humanity.

I am writing to you about the case of Daniel Hale. He has suffered considerable mental and financial damage over speaking out as a whistle blower about the impact of drone warfare, suffering PTSD and job loss for doing what he believed to be right so that the public are aware of the truth. Innocent people are killed and injured. That cannot advance peace. The bitterness and resentment it generates will not be ended by seeking to hide crimes from the public but by stopping it. There is also the danger that politicians may more readily go to war if they do not fear the back-lash protests of the public. It is a matter of concern not only in America but equally elsewhere, including Britain, that the truth should not be hidden from the public as to the number of those killed "mistakenly" by such weapons.

As you consider the sentence you must pass on Daniel Hale, I would simply respectfully ask you to keep in mind his courage in choosing to speak out in spite of the personal cost, in the genuine belief that the public need to know the truth of the high number of unintended victims caused by drones in order to prevent more tragic deaths. Surely that is not an action deserving imprisonment? We do indeed need to know.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Phillips



**From:** [carolp6798@yahoo.com](mailto:carolp6798@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** letter to Judge O'Grady  
**Date:** Saturday, May 1, 2021 12:26:00 AM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

Thank you for reading my letter in support of Daniel Hale. My name is Carol Pinson, and I live in Martinez, California. I am a mother. I initially became aware of Daniel when he gave a presentation to Code Pink. He was shy and self-effacing, not thinking anyone would be interested in his experience with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in the Air Force. I immediately felt a motherly love for this young man. I have since learned that he has PTSD, has not been able to get work, and has suffered financial hardship. It is quite upsetting that such a deserving young man has to undergo these privations for exposing the truth about drone warfare.

Daniel Hale should not be charged with a crime for revealing war crimes committed using drones. He is a conscientious airman, so principled that he could not close his eyes to governmental abuses. He was especially troubled by the idea that drones kill large numbers of civilians. Killing civilians is not only morally reprehensible, but it is also a war crime. Daniel said he was told by superiors that anyone over 16 in a group that might include the targeted individual should be considered an enemy combatant. This did not sit well with him, and drone victims' experiences have borne out his fears. Likewise, large groupings of people and car caravans are rarely the enemy, but they too are drone targets.

Truth is the currency of democracy. When we allow war crimes to be committed in our name, it does not bode well for our standing in the world. We become less of a cohesive community when our cherished ideals of truth, justice, freedom, equal rights, and fairness are discarded during wartime. We need more people like Daniel to throw back the curtain of secrecy. He exemplifies American ideals by his example.

All charges against Daniel Hale should be dropped. He is one of the few people willing to speak the truth. It is our government that should be held accountable.

Sincerely,

Carol Pinson

**From:** [Sebastiaan Poos](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Thursday, April 15, 2021 6:07:33 AM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

BALEN, Belgium, 15 april 2021

Your Honor,

My name is Sebastiaan Poos, born in The Netherlands, currently residing in Belgium. I do not speak as a US citizen, but as a concerned person who's life has been affected by ongoing military actions wherever and whenever in the world. I am deeply opposed to violence and especially to violence inflicted by governments. My own country (The Netherlands) has been guilty of many monstrosities in their former colonies, and, being part of its history, i feel ashamed for it. Wrongs cannot be undone, but an apology can ease some of the pain inflicted, certainly when that wrong has been done with intent.

So, when Daniel Hale publicly makes his apologies to families who have suffered from US military actions by drone technology, i find, he does what is decent. Making a personal statement, sharing one's views on the drone matter, revealing how indiscriminate the weapon is used, can hardly be a punishable matter. At least not by what is commonly, morally and intrinsically right.

I believe it is in the interest of the public, including every person in this world, that things are made clear about what this new way of making war is and does. For instance that several nations are using this weaponry to kill people in countries they are not even in war with, that this killing really is murdering, and done, too often, on insufficient data. That this kind of warfare is making wars last longer since it is less costly and, indeed, with less bodybags coming home, but really also less effective. That using drones for killing terrorists or suspects (often based merely on metadata from cell phone traffic) is done in a typical terrorist way: quite indiscriminately with no regard for innocent bystanders.

From what i have been reading and watching about Daniel Hale, he is a decent, kind person with high moral standards, willing to make his life less comforting for the benefit of the public. And less comforting it has been already with loss of work, financial hardship and PTSD. Adding a jail sentence is not proper, is not doing justice.

I am hoping your verdict will let justice prevail.

Thank you for your time.

Kind regards, hartelijke groet,

Sebastiaan Poos  
Belgium

Sebbbed from Paddie

**From:** [Nancy Roberts](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Saturday, April 17, 2021 12:52:51 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

My name is Nancy Roberts, I am a translator by profession, and I live in Wheaton, Illinois

I am writing to you today on behalf of Daniel Hale, who began speaking out in 2013 against drone warfare, an all-too-easy way of murdering people who are often innocent civilians, and who now faces up to a decade in prison just for telling the truth. Daniel's case matters to me because I believe it is my right, and the right of every US citizen, to have access to the truth about what our government is doing with our tax dollars, and that it is morally wrong to punish someone for revealing what amounts to a state crime.

Daniel has demonstrated great integrity and courage through his willingness to speak out about this heinous practice at great personal cost, and has suffered significant hardships as a result of his decision to do so. As a result of the case brought against him, he has experienced PTSD, loss of work, and financial hardship.

In addition to demonstrating courage in the face of danger and loss, Daniel has performed an extremely important public service by revealing information about immoral and illegal acts being carried out by the US military and which, as noted earlier, are being funded by taxpayers like me who, heretofore, were unjustifiably being kept in the dark by our government.

For these reasons, I appeal to you not to sentence Daniel to any prison time, but to recognize that his actions and words are, in fact, morally commendable and expressions of true patriotism and humanitarian awareness.

Thank you for considering my views.

Most sincerely yours,

Nancy Roberts

**From:** [Steve Roddy](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 14, 2021 3:25:25 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge Liam O'Grady,

I write as an educator in California who is deeply concerned about the use of drones in warfare. I have been working hard to inform my students about the many ethical and legal problems with such weapons, and in the process of educating myself and others about them, have come to admire Daniel Hale's courage in breaking the silence that prevails across the media and society as a whole on this topic.

Daniel has suffered a great deal for his decision to come forward. I ask that you sentence him to zero jail time. He is a young man of great integrity who deserves to get on with his life without suffering the indignity and challenges of a prison sentence.

Thank you for considering this request. I consider Daniel to be a hero, not a criminal.

Sincerely,

Stephen Roddy  
Professor and Chair, Modern & Classical Languages  
USF (San Francisco)

斯定文\*\*\*스티ヴェン·로디어\*\*\*스티벤 로디

Deborah Rosenstein  
[REDACTED]  
South Deerfield, MA 01373

April 18, 2021

The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady—

I've never met Daniel Hale, but his case was brought to my attention recently and I wanted to weigh in on his behalf.

This case is important to me for many reasons, most importantly that we need to reward heroic people in our society who disclose critical information related to human rights. I grew up learning about folks in my own family who perished due to human rights abuses, and, from a very young age, wanted to understand who had spoken up.

If it weren't for Daniel's courage, we would not know that 90% of the drones had killed people who were not meant to be targets. And we would not be able to learn from these mistakes so that they don't happen again. "Espionage" is a term I reserve for putting our own country's safety at risk. Daniel's disclosures did not do this. As a U.S. citizen, I feel safe because of his efforts.

It saddens me to think about all of the hardships that Daniel has already experienced—losing work, financial instability and PTSD.

As an adult educator, when I speak with the people I work with, I will tell them about Daniel— and my hope is that I can pass along that Judge O'Grady in Virginia did the right thing, and that our work to lessen the terror of war for everyone— U.S. troops, and the people they encounter around the world— will be strengthened by the bravery of Daniel Hale and others like him, past and present.

Thank you, sincerely,

Deborah Rosenstein

**From:** [rowleyclan@earthlink.net](mailto:rowleyclan@earthlink.net)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 27, 2021 9:40:21 PM

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Dear Honorable Liam O'Grady, US District Judge, USDC for the Eastern District of Virginia:

This letter is in support of Daniel Hale who pleaded guilty to the crime of letting the American people know the truth about drone warfare. I am a government retiree who watched Daniel give some of this information about the inherent imprecision of drone warfare and how numerous civilians in foreign countries have been killed by US drones in the "National Bird" film documentary a few years ago.

Keeping such information from the American public about the reality of drone warfare is not democratic nor in the public interest.

The situation has already taken a toll on Daniel Hale, including his suffering from PTSD, financial hardship and loss of employment.

We hope you can be lenient in your sentencing of Daniel considering ALL of the special factors in this case.

Coleen Rowley, Apple Valley, MN

"Power is always dangerous. Power attracts the worst and corrupts the best."  
--Edward Abbey

**From:** [J & J Schroeder](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 14, 2021 5:04:17 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

My name is Janice Schroeder. I am a retired teacher, a mother and a widow living in Berkeley, CA. As a teacher I always valued the importance of learning, and especially of teaching the truth to my students.

I am writing to you to implore you to look at Danile Hale's case from the perspective of who Mr. Hale is; a person of integrity, sensitivity, honesty and humanity who served as an intel analyst working with unmanned systems (drones). He has suffered PTSD as a result of performing his duties. He witnessed innocent civilians killed by drones in the attempt to kill someone who was identified as a threat. Over time this work seriously impacted him mentally and emotionally.

With great respect, I ask you to consider the harm these unmanned systems have caused and continue to cause by those in command in the military. By dehumanizing the targets of the drone attacks those in command make quick decisions about whether it is "worth it" to kill innocent young people in order to kill the one person identified as a threat.

I request that you consider the agonizing sacrifices Daniel Hale has made to educate Amercians by bringing the truth about unmanned systems to the American people. I deeply value this information and I am so grateful to have it.

Please have mercy on Daniel Hale in his upcoming sentencing.

Thank you for your consideration of my letter.

Sincerely,  
Janice Schroeder



**From:** [Benjamin Smith](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Thursday, April 15, 2021 5:37:43 PM

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To the Honorable Liam O'Grady,

My name is Benjamin Smith, and I'm writing to ask you to give Daniel Hale no jail time. I have no personal connection to Mr. Hale. I'm just a concerned citizen who believes he performed his patriotic duty -- and has suffered enough for it.

Hale's disclosures revealed wrongdoing on the part of the powerful, and made it possible for the American public to hold them accountable. In doing so, he provided an essential service. He's also paid dearly for it, as his prosecution has upended his life. Meanwhile, those responsible for the crimes he exposed have faced no consequences.

The very least we can do, I think, is end Daniel Hale's needless suffering. Because you're in a position to make this happen, I implore you once again: please do not give Daniel Hale jail time.

Thank you,  
Benjamin J. Smith

**From:** [Yahoo Desk](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Sunday, April 18, 2021 2:23:05 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Daniel Hale's case is important to me as a citizen. He was brave enough to tell me, Deidra Smith, the truth about how my hard-earned taxes are spent on drone warfare. My money needs to go to the people who need food, healthcare, and shelter in the U.S. At home in Colorado, we also need these tax dollars to stop the fires and global heating. While I'm worrying about COVID-19 and fleeing from wildfires, innocent civilians are being killed by drone with my tax money.

Daniel is my hero because he has tried to help people like me stand up to dictatorship that takes money away from me when I most need it and throws it away on 20-year wars that fail to solve the problem. Please give Daniel the sentence he has earned – our eternal gratitude.

Sincerely,  
Dea Smith

**From:** [William Snavely](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Sunday, April 18, 2021 1:19:52 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

My name is Kirk Snavely, writing from Lawrence KS, in support of Daniel Hale. In late March, Daniel pled guilty to giving an investigative journalist truthful information in the public interest about the secretive US drone warfare program, information that revealed gross human rights violations. It also revealed that drones were more deadly and less accurate than the US government presented publicly. In fact, nearly 90% of those killed by drone strikes were not the intended target. For this public service to his country, Daniel faces up to 10 years in prison.

Since he started speaking out against drone warfare in 2013, Daniel has experienced PTSD, loss of work, and financial hardship. In my opinion, he has suffered enough, and deserves leniency.

Sincerely,  
Kirk Snavely  
Lawrence, KS

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

**From:** [Nik S](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** "Letter in Support of Daniel Hale".  
**Date:** Sunday, April 18, 2021 12:59:46 PM

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The Honourable Liam O'Grady,  
United States District Judge,  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Your Honour, I am writing to you today to ask that you do not sentence the whistle-blower Daniel Hale to prison. My name is Nicholas Southwell, and i am a subject of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. I have been moved by the plight of Mr. Hale, who has shown great courage in telling the people of the United States the truth about the drone warfare program, which has lead to the deaths of many innocent civilians. As your own former president James Carter has put it:

"We don't know how many hundreds of innocent civilians have been killed in these attacks ... This would have been unthinkable in previous times."

Why should the American people not know about what is done in their name, or using their tax money? Was not your country founded on the concept of standing up to authority for the sake of ones conscience? Ask yourself, Your Honour, what would the Founding Fathers of your nation have made of these practices? Or of the practice of arresting those who attempt to shed light on such practices to the American people?

Mr. Hale has already suffered terribly due to PTSD, and financial hardship/loss of earnings. I beg of you your honour, to do all in your power to show leniency to Mr. Hale.

Yours Sincerely

Nicholas Southwell

Cornwall, England.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

**From:** [Christian Stalberg](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Sunday, May 2, 2021 11:22:41 AM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

My name is Christian Stalberg and I have been in opposition to the drone warfare program for a number of years, having protested at Creech Air Force Base in Nevada on multiple occasions. I am writing you regarding the former drone pilot Daniel Hale, a young man of conscience and a whistleblower.

When I first learned about armed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) that can kill people half a world away with no 'boots on the ground', I was aghast. I knew that this would change warfare forever and, worse than that, these devices could be used indiscriminately anywhere in the world, at any time. The program is controversial at best and defies rules of engagement on the battlefield. I've a background in computing and telecommunications, so I did some investigation into how UAVs are used, learning about remote sensing, biometrics and the like. I learned that drone pilots sitting in bunkers were piloting these drones and were witnessing the effects of the drone strikes in real time through cameras zeroing in and magnifying the strike zone. Later I actually met former pilots who suffer from the effects of PTSD and heard stories of them witnessing innocent women and children being killed, blown to pieces before their very eyes. In the drone kill program, any event or location is fair game. Weddings and funeral parties are attacked with civilians routinely sacrificed. In 2019 thirty civilians who were resting in a house after a days' work harvesting pine nuts in Afghanistan were killed in a drone strike that mistook the house for an ISIS hideout. Children are growing up today in countries where drone warfare is taking place with PTSD. Potential victims cannot surrender to a drone. There is no sense of safety or security for the innocent living in communities that are visited by drones flying overhead.

Given these horrors, how could a person of conscience not speak out? The impact of carrying out orders, carrying the burden of responsibility, would certainly wear a person down, questioning right from wrong, whether the ends justify the means, etc. Drone pilots are traumatized, with drug abuse, domestic violence and even suicide being the end result. Creech Air Force Base drone pilot Captain Kevin Larson committed suicide with a single self-inflicted gunshot to the head in January 2020 after learning he was going to be court martialed for drug and behavior problems.

While I've not personally met Daniel Hale, I have witnessed him speaking on camera. This young man strikes me as being an upstanding person of conscience who has suffered the ill effects of serving as a UAV pilot for targeted assassinations. I can well imagine Daniel obviously grappled with his conscience and decided to act on what in his estimation was the right, moral and just thing to do.

I ask you to drop all charges against Daniel and not punish a young man for turning humane and for his actions of attempting to cease further harm.

Sincerely,  
Christian Stalberg  
Kensington, California

**From:** [Jim Steitz](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Thursday, April 15, 2021 2:40:48 AM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I am a US citizen residing in North Carolina, urging you to show clemency in the case of Daniel Hale, and sentence him to no further prison time beyond time served. Hale's actions were entirely noble, moral, and in the public interest, as indisputably demonstrated by increased public understanding of the US conduct of certain drone warfare operations.

The information whose disclosure led to Hale's conviction under the Espionage Act was information to which the American public was entitled, as a condition of giving the informed consent of the governed that is a foundation of our democracy. The US national security related agencies are prone to grossly over-classifying information for reasons of political expediency and avoiding public embarrassment, rather than for genuine, specific security considerations, and Hale's case is an archetypical example of this. While Hale has suffered criminal prosecution for remedying this democratic deficit, the officials involved in the blatantly illegitimate classification of the very existence of an entire mode of warfare will face no consequences.

Where a law or its application are unjust, or in this case both, a Judge should show clemency in recognition of that larger context. This discretion is a vital check upon the most stringent and vindictive application of laws that are typically written expansively and flexibly for the use of prosecutors. The Espionage Act in particular does not even allow for a public interest defense, and criminalizes the transfer of information deemed by government to be 'classified,' regardless of the public interest in that information, and without any showing of the legitimacy of that classification. In recognition of these factors, I urge you to sentence Daniel Hale to no more than time served.

Sincerely,

Jim Steitz  
Charlotte, NC

**From:** [Phoebe Anne Sorgen](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale to The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
**Date:** Monday, April 19, 2021 4:45:05 AM  
**Importance:** High

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Honorable Liam O'Grady:

I was born and raised in Culpeper, Virginia. My father was a Republican dentist and my mother a Democrat homemaker and award-winning gardener. She was the Garden Club state legislative chair and orchestrated the beautiful Tiger Swallowtail butterfly becoming the Virginia state insect. My parents taught me to value justice, fairness, freedom, courage, and truth. My father, who died in Culpeper two years ago, was fond of saying, "Honesty is the best policy." He was a WW II veteran.

Daniel Hale's whistleblowing was quite courageous and honest to a "T". He should be feted, rather than punished, for telling the truth. Americans have the right to know about drone warfare done in our name and with our taxes. Mr. Hale has faced extreme financial and emotional hardship. In a fair world, he would remain free.

Please do what's fair and just. Give him no time in jail.

Sincerely,

Phoebe Thomas  
chair BFUU Social Justice Committee



## Letter in Support of Daniel Hale

From: David Turnoy

To: The Honorable Liam O'Grady, United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

April 27, 2021

Dear Judge O'Grady,

I am a retired teacher with a keen interest in history and in seeing that our country puts its best foot forward. I came of age during the Vietnam War, and since that time I have observed our country doing things around the world that harm other people. We are supposed to be the beacon of light and freedom, but our policies and military actions do not live up to our ideals.

One of the only ways to change misguided government action is to bring it to the attention of the public. This is exactly what Daniel Hale did in passing on information about the US drone program. Knowing the history of the treatment of whistleblowers in this county, it took great courage for Daniel to follow through on his course of behavior. But thanks to his efforts, the true nature of the drone program is now public knowledge, and the next thing we need to have happen is for the government to end this program.

The Espionage Act under which Daniel is charged is a relic of the First World War, established to stop protests against the entry into that war. I cannot understand how that law, which really has no reason to exist in a country that has Constitutional freedoms of speech and of the press, continues to remain on the books and to be used against citizens who are trying to get our government to do the right thing. No one was harmed by Daniel's action, and instead of being sentenced to prison, I think he should be awarded a medal for his courage in speaking up for what is right. This ordeal has taken a huge toll on Daniel, suffering PTSD, loss of work, and financial hardship. Therefore, I am hoping you will assign a suspended sentence or probation.

Daniel has performed a public service, acting on the basis of what his conscience told him was right. In a democratic system, the press is an important fourth informal branch of government. Sentencing Daniel harshly will discourage future whistleblowers from coming forward with important and needed information. After all, how are we to hold our government accountable unless people know the truth?

Thank you for considering my thoughts.

Sincerely,  
David Turnoy  
Eastsound, WA

**From:** [Kathy Tussing](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Friday, April 16, 2021 10:57:23 AM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court  
for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady:

I am Katharine Tussing from Buffalo, New York. I am writing to you about Daniel Hale.

Daniel Hale is a man of high moral character and integrity.

The American people have a right to know what their country is doing. Daniel Hale should not be punished for revealing the truth.

Please do not convict Daniel Hale or sentence him to prison.

Thank you,

Katharine Tussing



July 7, 2021

Honorable Liam O'Grady  
Senior United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Judge O'Grady:

I write to you in my capacity as Executive Director of Defending Rights and Dissent (DRAD) to urge leniency for Daniel Hale. DRAD is a national civil liberties organization founded in 1960 to promote and protect First Amendment rights and the rule of law.

DRAD has been following Mr. Hale's case from the very beginning. We sponsored a letter of concern signed by 173 prominent individuals and 50 organizations in July, 2019. The signatories included journalists, as well as former government officials (including those who worked in intelligence), demonstrating a wide range of concern and that even those who worked in military or intelligence understood the public interest of what Mr. Hale released.

Mr. Hale has pleaded guilty under the Espionage Act, an act that has been a top concern for us as a free expression organization dedicated to preserving the First Amendment. Journalism based on inside sources has always been an important ingredient in our democracy, so charging those sources under the Espionage Act is very troubling. The Act makes no distinction between true espionage and government employees who act as journalist sources. Throughout the 100 year history of the Espionage Act, it had been exceedingly rare to prosecute journalist's sources under the Act. We have recently seen an uptick in these prosecutions, and we are deeply concerned about the chilling effect this will have on our free press.

These prosecutions offend the rule of law as they are selective. People who reveal information favorable to the government are not prosecuted, but those who reveal unfavorable information are. We also note, as a civil liberties organization, that many of these

prosecutions are against whistleblowers who reveal information about core civil liberties concerns.

The targeted killing program, which included targeting and killing civilians and U.S. citizens, raises immense human rights and civil liberties concerns. DRAD has opposed and sought more information about the drone program for over a decade. The program has stirred deep public debate, as is appropriate in a democracy. But that debate was stifled due to excessive secrecy (it could be argued that the program was being kept secret only from the American public; inhabitants of Yemen, Afghanistan, and Somalia certainly knew about it).

The information Mr. Hale released about civilian casualties from drone strikes was essential to the public's understanding of the program. It was essential for citizens to hold their government accountable. The importance of these revelations to the public discourse cannot be overstated.

The Espionage Act fails to distinguish between those who act in bad faith such as spies for foreign powers, and those who act to advance the American public interest. The law was never intended to prosecute whistleblowers for bringing vital information to the American public about activities of their own government. Mr. Hale is not a spy, he is a whistleblower who acted in good faith to advance the public interest. He did not harm national security.

He should therefore be sentenced appropriately and receive maximum leniency possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sue Udry".

Sue Udry  
Executive Director

**From:** [Weaver, Parker R](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Sunday, April 18, 2021 1:20:17 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Hello,

My name is Parker Weaver and I am from Texas. The case of Daniel Hale is important to me because Daniel Hale's revelations and activism highlight the errors of US drone policy. Specifically, the fact that 90% of those killed by US drone strikes are not the intended target demonstrate how counterintuitive this drone policy is. With such a high civilian casualty rate, US drone strikes lead to popular anger and resentment towards with the US which goes on to provide more legitimacy to the enemies of the US, namely the Taliban and al-Qaeda. It is no wonder that after almost twenty years of drone strikes in Afghanistan and Pakistan, alongside on-the-ground operations, these two terrorist entities have only been strengthened and revived.

Daniel Hale's revelations are not a threat to US national security. Rather, it is the very drone policy that Hale is exposing that is the threat to US national security. Disenchanted civilians in countries like Yemen, Pakistan, and Afghanistan have flocked to terrorist groups after seeing their communities and loved ones be destroyed by US drone strikes. This drone policy has only made recruiting easier for the likes of al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

Your honor, I urge you to think proactively and in a long-term manner. Daniel Hale's revelations have exposed a major flaw in US foreign policy and military doctrine that has only aided our enemies and damaged our country's image worldwide. Are you willing to let Daniel Hale be heard, and thereby help to begin repairing the damage done by US drone policy? Or are you willing to send Hale to prison, ignoring the merits of his revelations and letting misguided US policies continue to bolster our enemies abroad?

Think carefully about this your honor,

Parker Weaver

**From:** [Janet Weidman](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** "Letter in Support of Daniel Hale"  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 20, 2021 3:40:54 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

My name is Janet Weidman. I live in Astoria, Oregon. This case is very important to me because I have read a lot about the devastating loss of life as a result of drones. I feel it is not just to take the lives of innocents in this way.

In late March, Daniel Hale pleaded guilty for the **crime of letting the American people know the truth about drone warfare**. I have admired Daniel since he started speaking out in 2013 against drone warfare. Drone warfare is an all-too-easy way of murdering people who are often innocent civilians. I learned that Daniel faces up to a decade in prison for just telling the truth. This seems unconscionable to me.

Daniel has faced many hardships due to his integrity. This case has taken a toll on him: he has experienced PTSD, loss of work, and financial hardship, just to name three major tolls. This is an honorable human who was following his conscience.

Daniel was accused of giving an investigative journalist truthful information in the public interest about the secretive US drone warfare program. This truthful information revealed gross human rights violations. This is VERY important information. It revealed that drones were more deadly and less accurate than our government - the US government - presented publicly. In fact, nearly 90% of those killed by drone strikes were not the intended target. This is not going to help our military or our country. How can any other country trust us when we take the lives of innocents through drone warfare? We are not safer, and they certainly are NOT safer. Daniel did the right thing, in my opinion, in giving this truthful information to the investigative journalist. I hope you will consider his integrity when sentencing him for what is being labeled a crime.

Sincerely,

~ Janet Weidman

**From:** [Susan Witka](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Sunday, May 16, 2021 6:12:21 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States O'Grady  
District Judge  
United States

Dear Judge Grady:

My name is Susan Witka. I am a former high school teacher with the San Francisco Unified School District.

Daniel Hale exemplifies what we, as educators, hope for in the ethical character of our students.

Daniel's courage to tell the truth to us, the American people, about his experience in drone warfare is a reflection of true patriotism.

I support the integrity of this young American patriot. Please be just in the future sentencing of Daniel Hale. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Susan J Witka

**From:** [Vivian](#)  
**To:** [Todd Richman](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of Daniel Hale  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 14, 2021 4:31:18 PM

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The Honorable Liam O'Grady  
United States District Judge  
United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia

Dear Honorable Judge Liam O'Grady,

I write to request leniency for Daniel Hale. My name is Mary Vivian Zelaya. I am a retired elementary school teacher. I live in Berkeley, California. I recently heard Daniel Hale publicly apologize to the families of those who lost their lives due to his actions as a member of the military. What a civil and humane thing to do! The courage to do such a thing is an indicator of his honesty and good character. In these difficult times let us all do what we can to preserve our common humanity.

Trusting in your wise and courageous judgement,

Mary Vivian Zelaya

Berkeley, California